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LONGSTREET'S CORPS AT CHICKAMAUGA:  
LESSONS IN INTER-THEATER DEPLOYMENT

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

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## ABSTRACT

LONGSTREET'S CORPS AT CHICKAMAUGA: Lessons in Inter-Theater Deployment, by Major Frederick A. Eiserman, USA, 141 pages.

In September 1863 the Confederate States of America reinforced their Western Theater of Operations by conducting a 950 mile, inter-theater rail movement of two infantry divisions. Within 24 hours of their arrival, almost one-half of these troops found themselves actively engaged in the Battle of Chickamauga. This study is an analysis of the planning and execution of that operation and the role of those troops in the battle, with lessons learned examined in relation to modern contingency missions.

Numerous similarities exist between the 1863 operation and modern deployment missions. Fighting outnumbered and with limited transport capability, such factors as surprise, security, logistics and enemy maneuver can easily affect such an operation. Discussion includes the importance of obtaining timely decisions from the National Command Authority and the tremendous need for flexibility in planning and execution.

The study concludes that time and technology have not changed basic troop movement procedures as much as one might think. The most important lesson from the 1863 operation is the simple fact that in spite of recent, major defeats, the Confederacy was still able and willing to seize the strategic initiative. Although that initiative was subsequently thrown away by failure to pursue the Federals, that does not reduce the importance of the lessons learned.



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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

LONGSTREET'S CORPS AT CHICKAMAUGA: Lessons in Inter-Theater Deployment, by Major Frederick A. Eiserman, USA, 141 pages.

In September 1863 the Confederate States of America reinforced their Western Theater of Operations by conducting a 950 mile, inter-theater rail movement of two infantry divisions. Within 24 hours of their arrival, almost one-half of these troops found themselves actively engaged in the Battle of Chickamauga. This study is an analysis of the planning and execution of that operation and the role of those troops in the battle, with lessons learned examined in relation to modern contingency missions.

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### SOURCES

Figure 1. Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For the Common Defense (New York: The Free Press, 1984), p. 157.

Figure 2, 4, 5. Drawn by Maj. Joe Skeele.

Figure 3. Robert C. Black, The Railroads of the Confederacy (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1952) p. 189.

Figure 6, 7, 8, 10. Glenn Tucker, "The Battle of Chickamauga," Civil War Times Illustrated. (May 1969), pp. 15, 23, 32, 42.

Figure 9. Glenn Tucker, Chickamauga: Bloody Battle in the West, (Dayton: Morningside Bookshop Press, 1976), p. 267.

## CHAPTER 1

...two ways of applying past experiences: One is to enable us to avoid past mistakes and to manage better in similar circumstances next time; the other is to enable us to anticipate a future course of events.1

The U.S. Army must be prepared to respond to a wide variety of contingency missions. Fundamental to these missions is the ability to move forces rapidly from the continental United States to reinforce a distant theater of operations. This scenario is made even more difficult by the fact that these forces may find themselves in combat within a short period of time, fighting on unfamiliar terrain, alongside total strangers.

While this movement is basic to most of our plans, it is a highly complex operation. Detailed planning and execution are critical. Such factors as surprise, security, distance, logistics and enemy maneuver can easily affect the success or failure of the entire operation.

The American Civil War provides an excellent example of an inter-theater movement involving two light infantry divisions. In September 1863, more than 12,000 Confederate soldiers from Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's First Corps, stationed in northern Virginia, were transported 950 miles

by rail to reinforce another Confederate army operating in northern Georgia. Within 24 hours of their arrival, many of these forces found themselves alongside total strangers, on unfamiliar terrain, actively engaged in the Battle of Chickamauga. A Cherokee Indian word that ironically translates as the "River of Death," Chickamauga was one of the hardest fought, bloodiest battles of the Civil War. Combined casualties were more than 37,000 in the two-day battle.<sup>2</sup>

The overall impact of this rail movement is not without controversy. Some see it as a "supreme achievement" and "the outstanding operational feat of the Confederate railroads during the war."<sup>3</sup> Others, however, view it as less successful. Thomas Connelly, author of a study on the Army of Tennessee, which received the reinforcements, insists: "Historians' depiction of a vast concentration of men on the Chickamauga to crush the Federals is more romanticism than fact....The much-heralded stream of reinforcement from Virginia was actually a mere trickle."<sup>4</sup>

But most will agree that it was a major attempt, possibly the last real chance, by the Confederate Government to reverse its losses. The concept was simple. Go on the defense and employ economy of force measures in the Eastern Theater. Then, take advantage of interior lines and the railroads, seize the initiative, and mass forces at the critical point in the West. By September 1863, Chattanooga

was that critical point. It's vital rail network, key to the industrial center of Atlanta, was one of the few remaining links between Richmond and the resources of the Mississippi Valley.



Figure 1  
The Civil War  
Area Of Operations

Two Divisions Of Longstreet's Corps  
Moved From The Eastern Theater, By  
Rail, To Reinforce The Western Theater

In spite of the 122 years that have elapsed since that operation, there are many similarities to current contingency missions. In both men and equipment, the Confederates were fighting outnumbered. Their transport capability was inadequate to meet the overwhelming logistical requirements of a large troop movement. Initially, the route was to be through an unsecure area, into a theater in which enemy forces were conducting offensive operations. Additionally, basic principles of planning and organization, problems in coordinating troops and trains and times, deficiencies in command and control and logistics support, and the ever-present need for flexibility and luck seem to be timeless.

But what about the lessons learned from this operation? Are they also timeless? If so, they may be applied to today's contingency missions.

The purpose of this study, then, is to examine and analyze the role of Longstreet's Corps in the Battle of Chickamauga. The rail movement and the subsequent tactical employment in battle are tied together as a single military operation. The planning, execution, successes and failures of the operation are analyzed as a whole, shedding new light on an important operation of the Civil War. Lessons learned are then examined in relation to modern, inter-theater contingency missions, to draw any conclusions that may be relevant to today's army.

A variety of literature exists on some portions of this operation. Several secondary sources on Civil War railroads provide general information on the movement of troops during the war. Since their purpose is to focus on the use of the railroad, they usually end as the battle begins. And there are numerous accounts and "recounts" of the Battle of Chickamauga. Their function is most often to describe or analyze the battle, or detail a particular individual's role. Yet none of these sources attempt to tie the complete story of the rail movement and the employment in battle together as a single operation. In fact, most of the specific details of the planning and execution of the movement, as well as its impact on the overall operation, are missing from the pages of history.

However, several key primary sources do exist which allow the piecing together of much of the movement planning process. A book of Confederate Railroad Bureau telegrams and carrier passing reports is maintained by the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Virginia. Across the country, the Huntington Library of San Marino, California holds the Railroad Bureau Chief's Letterbook, which contains copies of additional vital telegrams and messages. Additionally, the diaries and letters of the soldiers who took part in the operation contain details and interesting anecdotes of the rail movement.

This project will be limited to the planning and execution of the movement of Longstreet's Corps from Virginia to Georgia and its tactical employment in the Battle of Chickamauga. It is not intended to be a complete account of the battle or campaign, nor will it address events involving Longstreet that followed the battle. The tactical focus is primarily on Longstreet and the Confederate left wing, and other portions of the battle will only be looked at as they impact on that subject. Primary source material will be used as much as possible.

The study is presented in five chapters. The purpose, background and scope of the project is defined in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 outlines the strategic situation, condition of the Southern railroads, initial command decisions and impact of the fall of Knoxville, Tennessee. Chapter 3 describes the final planning and execution of the movement, while the utilization and overall impact of Longstreet's Corps on the battle is covered in Chapter 4. A summary of lessons learned, their application to today's Army and conclusions are presented in Chapter 5.

The role of Longstreet's Corps in the Battle of Chickamauga is far removed from the missions of today's Army in both time and technology. Yet, in spite of the passage of time, enough similarities to modern contingency missions exist to warrant a study of the event. History, by providing insight into common situations, may allow us to

apply our past experience and prevent, rather than  
reexperience, mistakes.

CHAPTER 1

END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Barbara W. Tuchman, Practicing History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), p. 249.

<sup>2</sup>Glenn Tucker, Chickamauga: Bloody Battle in the West (Dayton: Morningside Bookshop, 1976), pp. 122, 388.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 93; George E. Turner, Victory Rode the Rails: The Strategic Place of Railroads in the Civil War (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953), p. 285.

<sup>4</sup>Thomas L. Connelly, Autumn of Glory (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1971), p. 191.

## CHAPTER 2

Should General Longstreet reach General Bragg in time to aid him in winning a victory, and return to this army, it will be well, but should he be detained there without being able to do any good, it will result in evil.<sup>1</sup>

--Lee to Davis

In August 1863, President Jefferson Davis ordered a day of "fasting, humiliation, and prayer" throughout the Confederate States of America. The proclamation, brought about by the recent series of military defeats and political setbacks, encouraged all citizens to visit their "respective places of public worship" and to pray for divine favor "on our suffering country."<sup>2</sup> Davis fully realized that this symbolic act, intended to focus the will of the people, was only a first step. The time had come for critical presidential decisions that would affect the life or death of the struggling nation.

On his desk was a letter of resignation from Gen. Robert E. Lee, whose Army of Northern Virginia was trying to put itself back together after Gettysburg. Problems with large-scale desertions and the recent, heavy battle casualties, were hampering unit reconstitution.

Farther south, the city of Charleston, South Carolina was under heavy siege from combined Union Army and Navy forces. Fort Sumter, key to Charleston's defenses and a symbol of Southern secession, was being reduced to a mass of rubble. The commander of the beleaguered city, Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard, was calling for additional troops to defend the city.

In the West, Vicksburg, Mississippi had fallen to Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. The Mississippi River was now under Union control, and the states of Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas were severed from the Confederacy. Gen. Braxton Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee sat in front of Chattanooga, facing two Union armies, one under Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans and the other under Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside. Bragg was also looking to President Davis for additional troops.

And if those factors were not enough, foreign recognition, particularly from England, had failed to materialize. The Confederate President had just instructed the Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin, to officially notify the Confederate diplomat in London that his mission was at an end.

Clearly, decisions had to be made to regain the initiative and offset these recent losses. Davis realized that much of the population of the North, in spite of recent victories, was beginning to grow tired

of war. Only the month before, draft riots in New York City had resulted in more than a dozen deaths and \$1.5 million in property damage.<sup>3</sup> Prolonging the war might have an impact on the Northern presidential election, which was only a year away. If a peace candidate was elected, the South might still gain its independence.

The first, and easiest, decision to make involved Gen. Lee's status. President Davis quickly rejected the resignation, writing: "To ask me to substitute you by some one in my judgment more fit to command, or who would possess more of the confidence of the army, or of the reflecting men of the country, is to demand an impossibility."<sup>4</sup> But solutions to the other problems, especially providing additional troops, would be more difficult.

The idea of the Confederates sending reinforcements to the West was not new. Both the Federals and Confederates had already moved troops by rail on several occasions, and President Davis had been under pressure from various groups to make the move for quite sometime. As far back as February 1862, Gen. Beauregard, then commander of the Army of Tennessee, had stated that all of the western territory could not be defended at the same time. He proposed concentrating in a single area of operations in Tennessee. Four months later, after he had been

removed from the command, he made the same recommendations to his replacement, Gen. Bragg. In early 1863, Lt. Gen. Longstreet, commander of Lee's First Corps and affectionately known as "Lee's Old Warhorse," had suggested to Lee the idea of sending his troops west from Virginia. He even wrote his personal friend, Senator Louis T. Wigfall of Texas, about the idea and its "opportunities for all kinds of moves to great advantages."<sup>5</sup>

About the same time, Union officers recognized the possibilities of a rapid Confederate concentration in the West. At one point, fear of the movement's potential, combined with faulty intelligence, had prompted Union Maj. Gen. Rosecrans, then in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, to telegraph his superiors, "There is no longer any doubt...that Longstreet is expected from Virginia." Four days later Rosecrans predicted, "If Longstreet has brought fifty-five regiments west, this Middle Tennessee will be a great battle-ground."<sup>6</sup> To his great relief, however, Longstreet remained in Virginia.

Again in May 1863, following Lee's victory at Chancellorsville, the idea of concentrating in the West was discussed at the highest levels in Richmond. The situation had been vastly different, as the operation was seen as a way to further capitalize on the recent

victory in the East. Gen. Beauregard recommended letting "Lee act on the defensive, and send to Bragg 30,000 men for him to take the offensive with at once."<sup>7</sup> He also wrote Gen. Bragg and Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, departmental commander of the West, as well as Senator Wigfall, recommending this course of action.

Longstreet had stopped in Richmond earlier that month, on his way from Suffolk back to Gen. Lee's army. He discussed the idea of sending his corps to reinforce the West with both Secretary Seddon and Senator Wigfall. After Longstreet rejoined his unit, he again brought it up to Lee, who still opposed the plan. Lee, ever the Virginian, had favored an offensive operation in the East. President Davis decided in favor of Lee, and the Army of Northern Virginia had moved north on June 3, 1863.

But all of that was in the past. The situation was different now, as the Confederacy was desperately fighting for its survival. President Davis continued to get more pressure to reinforce the West. Gen. Beauregard, even before the outcome of Gettysburg was decided, had bitterly written Johnston, "of what earthly use is that 'raid' of Lee's army...in violation of all the principles of war?"<sup>8</sup> Gen. Samuel Cooper, Davis' own Adjutant and Inspector General and the highest ranking officer in the Confederate Army,

believed the wisest course would be to strengthen Bragg and attack the Union forces under Rosecrans.

Davis' friend and West Point classmate, Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, now second in command to Bragg in the Army of Tennessee, also wrote the President. He urged a build-up of Bragg's forces so they "could move upon Rosecrans with a success which would be satisfactory." Senator G.A. Henry of Tennessee also offered his opinions. He wrote the President, "we want some fighting generals in the Army of Tennessee....As sure as you are born, that army is better than its commanders, and you will see my statement verified if men of more nerve are put in its command. Can't Longstreet be sent there?"<sup>9</sup>

In addition to these recommendations, President Davis sought the advice of Gen. Lee. "I need your counsel, but strive to meet the requirements of the hour without distracting your attention at a time when it should be concentrated on the field before you."<sup>10</sup> By August 24, President Davis was ready to meet with Lee on the subject. On that day he wrote:

For some days I have hoped to be able to visit you, wishing to consult with you on military questions of a general character ....If circumstances will permit your absence, I wish you to come to Richmond.<sup>11</sup>

Leaving Longstreet behind as acting commander, Gen. Lee proceeded to Richmond to meet with President Davis and a variety of government officials. This "White House Conference" lasted almost two weeks, partly because the President was ill and required periods of rest. Much of the discussion centered on how and where to retake the initiative. Lengthy meetings, held in poorly ventilated, smoke-filled offices, combined with the oppressive August heat, took their toll on the participants.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of the numerous recommendations for concentrating in the West, Gen. Lee continued to oppose sending any part of his army out of Virginia. He feared that a large reduction in his force would result in another Union attack against Richmond. He also believed that if he could rest and refit his units, the best course of action would be to renew the offensive in the East. One of Lee's particular concerns was improving the condition of his army's horses. In the meetings he pushed the Quartermaster's Department for large shipments of much-needed corn.

Lee's initial arguments were either acceptable to President Davis and Secretary Seddon, or the President was stalling a decision. As late as August 31 Lee was sure that his proposals would be approved. On that day he informed Longstreet that he had been promised "3,000

bushels of corn per day," and instructed him to "prepare the army for offensive operations."<sup>13</sup>

Two days later Longstreet replied that he had "expressed to Generals Ewell and Hill your wishes, and am doing all that can be done to be well prepared." Longstreet then added, "I know but little of the condition of our affairs in the west, but am inclined to the opinion that our best opportunity for great results is in Tennessee." He went on to propose, "If we could hold the defensive here with two corps, and send the other to operate in Tennessee with that army, I think that we could accomplish more than by an advance from here."<sup>14</sup>

On the evening of September 2, Gen. Lee and President Davis went riding together. John B. Jones, a clerk in the War Department who observed them, noted in his diary that "neither were greeted with cheers." The diarist reasoned that Lee had probably "lost some popularity among idle street walkers by his retreat from Pennsylvania."<sup>15</sup>

About this same time, Lee's influence at the conference also began to dim. For some reason Davis and Secretary Seddon shifted their support to the idea of the western concentration. On September 3 Lee left Richmond and observed the Union army from a vantage point on Clark's Mountain, just north of his

headquarters at Orange Court House. The next day, September 4, he apparently was at his headquarters and, before returning to Richmond, left a note or letter for Longstreet. Lee asked for an estimate of how long Longstreet thought it would take to move his corps to Tennessee and back. In his response, Longstreet was not sure exactly how much time would be needed, but he added, "I fear if it is put off any longer we shall be too late." Longstreet went on to suggest that if his entire corps could not be moved, he could possibly take three brigades and switch jobs with Gen. Bragg. He justified his proposal by saying "I feel that I am influenced by no personal motive in this suggestion...I doubt if General Bragg has confidence in his troops or himself either. He is not likely to do a great deal for us."<sup>16</sup>

As a basic plan for the movement began to take shape in Richmond, each of the principal players had his own slightly different concept. President Davis envisioned troops going west from Virginia with Lee in personal command. Longstreet also saw value in Lee going west, but at the same time was more than willing to take over the Army of Tennessee himself. How much of that willingness was personal ambition for higher command and how much was genuine concern for the operation is still subject to debate. And Gen. Lee,

who had finally resigned himself to the idea of some of his troops going west, did not feel he should accompany them. He believed the officers already in the area would know the situation and terrain better.

As the leading players continued to refine their own ideas, Brig. Gen. Alexander R. Lawton, the Confederate Quartermaster-General, and Maj. Frederick W. Sims, Chief of the Railroad Bureau, became heavily involved in the planning. Together, these two men would accomplish "the task of transporting the largest body of men -- approximately 12,000 -- that had yet been moved by railroad such a distance in the history of war."<sup>17</sup>

Reminiscing about the operation and his own involvement many years later, Lawton wrote:

Gen. Lee was appealed to to send Longstreet's entire corps, horses and artillery from the Rapidan all the way to the shadow of Lookout Mountain, to reinforce General Bragg...If this corps could reach Bragg in time for the impending battle, he might expect success; ...But if Longstreet should reach Bragg too late to take part in the fight, and General Lee's strength diminished to that fearful extent, it might imperil the existence of both armies, and expose our weakness everywhere. The Quartermaster-General must say when Longstreet's corps could be delivered at Chickamauga. The time was named, and I tremble now as I recall the responsibility which that reply involved.<sup>18</sup>

The initial plan was to detach Longstreet's Corps of three divisions, keep one in the East to bolster the Charleston and Richmond defenses, and send the other two divisions west. Artillery and horses would accompany the divisions. The western movement would be by rail from the current troop positions along the Rapidan River in Virginia to Chattanooga, passing through the cities of Lynchburg and Bristol, Virginia, and Knoxville, Tennessee. Initial time estimates for this 540 mile route ranged from two to four days.

Considering the condition and efficiency of the Confederate railroads in September 1863, this operation was somewhat ambitious. Movement over the Knoxville route involved lines owned by six different, privately owned companies. It had only been four months since the Congress had authorized the War Department to seize and manage the lines, and that authority was yet to be tested. Full cooperation between private enterprise and government requirements still had a long way to go.

For the most part, the Southern rail system was a "patchwork of short lines" running from city to city, but often without junctions. "Rates differed, equipment varied, schedules were uncoordinated, and worst of all the gauges differed, causing disgraceful delays for passengers and freight attempting long passage."<sup>19</sup> To make matters even worse, equipment was

quickly wearing out and could not be repaired due to lack of materials and trained mechanics.

Conditions along the route to Chattanooga were typical. A Tennessee civilian with Union sympathies, who had reconnoitered the route in June 1863 for Union Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas, reported:

On the railroad leading from Chattanooga to Knoxville there are 19 engines employed, 12 of which are nearly unfit for service, and the balance considerably worn. There are three stone and two wooden bridges on this road; the latter are over the Tennessee and Hiwassee Rivers; both covered. The Hiwassee Bridge is guarded by about 50 men, and the Tennessee by 500 men, at Loudon.

On the road from Knoxville to Lynchburg, Virginia, there are 12 engines, three of which are good and the others scarcely fit for use. On that road there are two important bridges across the Holston and Watauga Rivers. They are new wooden bridges--uncovered trestle-work....<sup>20</sup>

It was over this route that the Confederates were preparing to move.

By September 5 Maj. Sims, who was responsible for the rail movement out of Richmond, was gathering his own detailed planning information from officials along the Knoxville route. The superintendent in Lynchburg, Thomas Dodamead, must have been startled when Sims sent him the following telegraph message: "Will you need aid

and how much to move twenty thousand men and fifty pieces of artillery to Bristol in five days." Sims followed up with more details in a second telegram the same day, adding, "I want to know how many cars and engines you will need so as to send them to you if they are to be had. You shall be advised in time to prepare."21

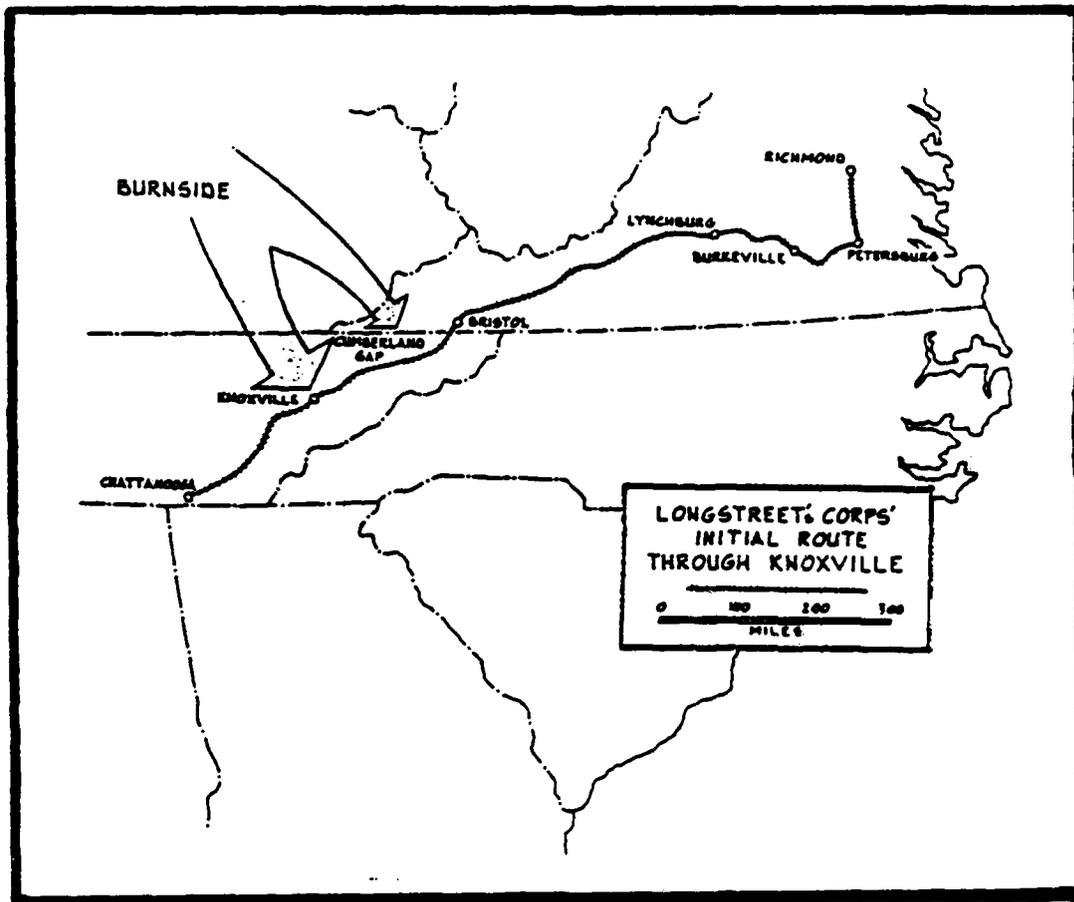


Figure 2

Initial Route Through Knoxville

As with many military operations, rumors were already starting to spread in the Confederate capital. Jones, the war department clerk, wrote in his September 5 diary entry, "It is believed that Lee, with a large portion of his army, will proceed immediately to Tennessee against Rosecrans....But I fear for Virginia when Lee is away!"<sup>22</sup>

Planning continued throughout Sunday, September 6. It appears that on this day, after almost two weeks of discussion, President Davis finally made the decision to send Longstreet's Corps West. That evening Gen. Lee met with Quartermaster-General Lawton to complete the final arrangements. At some point he must have indicated a desire to get the troops to Richmond as quickly as possible. After the meeting, Lee prepared a message for Davis, stating he had arranged "the transportation of Longstreet's Corps" with Brig. Gen. Lawton, and that he had also provided "the necessary orders for the movement of the troops and their subsistence on the road." Lee then went on to address the President's desire for him to command the reinforcements for the West. He wrote, "As regards myself, should you think that the service will be benefited by my repairing to the Army of Tennessee, I will of course submit to your judgement....I did not intend to decline the service, if desired that I should

undertake it, but merely to express the opinion that the duty could be better performed by the officers already in that department."<sup>23</sup>

The next day, September 7, Maj. Sims sent a note to Lee, who was preparing to return to his army. Sims outlined the status of the plans:

Three thousand troops a day is the utmost that can be transported South and under instructions from Genl Lawton I have ordered transportation for that number to be at Hamilton's crossing tomorrow and daily thereafter till Gen Hood's Division is moved. General Law was telegraphed to be in readiness with the troops.

In response to Lee's desire to move quickly, he added "they can be brought to Richmond faster than this but it will not result in any advantage to do so."<sup>24</sup>

Sometime that day Gen. Lee left Richmond to return to his headquarters near Orange Court House. He was unaware that events had already occurred that would drastically change the entire situation.

Back on September 2, the day that Lee and Davis rode through the streets of Richmond, Union Gen. Ambrose Burnside's cavalry had also been riding--into the city of Knoxville. The direct route from Lynchburg to Chattanooga, the one that Maj. Sims was organizing for the movement, had been severed by Union forces.

It was not until September 7 that President Davis received a telegram from Bragg in Chattanooga informing him that "reports represent Burnside at Knoxville."<sup>25</sup> In the meantime, Burnside had continued to maneuver his forces, capturing Cumberland Gap on September 9. Union Gen. Rosecrans was also on the move, having crossed the Tennessee River south of Chattanooga. Although Bragg did not mention it in the telegram, he was already making evacuation plans. Within 48 hours Union troops would enter Chattanooga unopposed.

But plans were already too far along to cancel the movement. Maj. Sims immediately went back to the planning board to work out a new route. The only alternative was to pass through Virginia, down through both Carolinas, across the state of Georgia to Atlanta, and then north up the Western & Atlantic line toward Chattanooga. Instead of the 540 miles over connecting lines, the new route was over 950 miles and required numerous train changes because of unconnecting lines.

As planning continued, Maj. Sims carefully worked out the details of the route. Only a single track was available from Richmond to Weldon, North Carolina. To help divide the load requirements, Sims selected two different routes out of Weldon. One went south to Wilmington, then west through Florence to Kingsville, South Carolina. The other route left Weldon and passed

through Raleigh, Charlotte and Columbia into Kingsville. From Kingsville, the route was again confined to a single line running west through Augusta and Atlanta, then north toward Chattanooga. An exact detraining point could not be determined since Gen. Bragg's army was still moving south from Chattanooga.

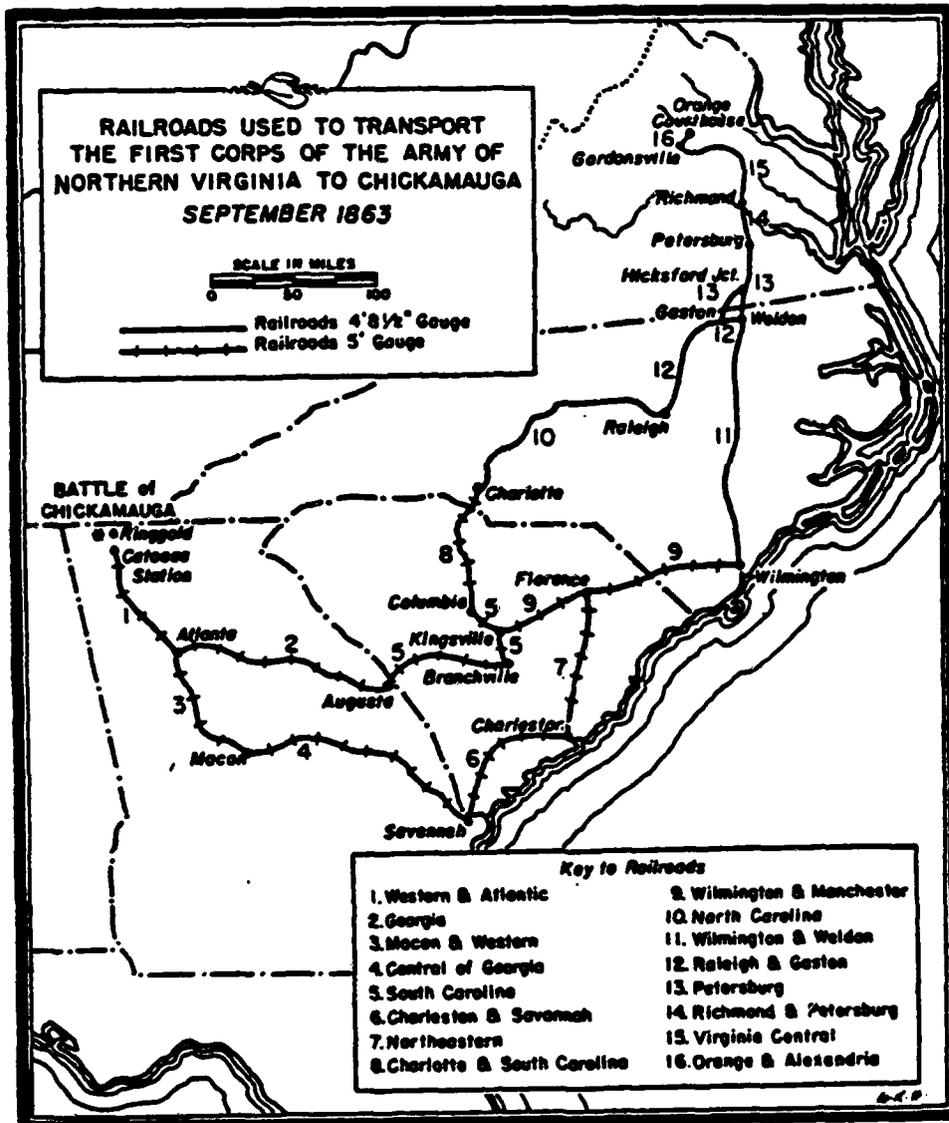


Figure 3

This time it was the railroad agent in Goldsboro, North Carolina, Maj. John Whitford, who would be startled with a telegraph message from Sims: "We want to move about 18,000 troops through N.Ca. in five days. Had you not better be at Weldon to Superintend it. The first train will probably be at Weldon Wednesday morning. Answer immediately."<sup>26</sup>

Maj. Whitford responded the same day, Monday September 7: "Are the troops to go over North Carolina or Wilmington & Weldon Roads or both & have you notified any of our Roads of their expected movements or have any of them left Richmond. It may be better for me to go to Raleigh. I can tell when I receive your answer."<sup>27</sup>

The next day, September 8, as Confederate troops were already beginning to move southward, Maj. Sims provided additional information to Whitford. "The troops may go by either route that can take them quickest to Kingsville. It would probably be better to divide them to secure the work being done promptly. To send all by Wilmington would overtask the Manchester road. I have not notified any roads in North Carolina. I leave it all to you. The first 1500 will leave here tonight and the next ten or twelve hours later. Let me know if the cars & engines will be at Weldon."<sup>28</sup>

At least nine more telegrams were sent out by Sims and one received on that same day. Agents in Wilmington, Columbia, Goldsboro, Charleston, Augusta and Atlanta were all brought into the planning. Then, with the movement committed to the southern routes, Sims sent a cancellation message to his agent on the northern route in Lynchburg. Three days after being asked if he needed aid in moving 20,000 troops, the agent was simply informed, "The contemplated movement has been changed. Please inform Mr. Vandegrift."<sup>29</sup>

Also on September 8, the matter of who would command the forces going west was finally resolved. President Davis, responding to Lee's September 6 letter, wrote: "Have considered your letter. Believe your presence in the western army would be worth more than the addition of a corps, but fear the effect of your absence from Virginia. Did not doubt your willingness to do whatever was best for the country."<sup>30</sup> Lt. Gen. Longstreet, who had been urging adoption of the movement for many months, would now accompany his two divisions west.

Planning continued at Gen. Lee's headquarters near Orange Court House. Marching orders had already been issued to most of the units, heading them south towards Richmond. Discussions between Lee and Longstreet focused on exactly which troops to take west and which

ones to leave behind. Sending troops to both the Army of Tennessee and Charleston compounded the selection problem, as well as transportation and logistics. The divisions of Maj. Gen. John B. Hood and Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws were selected for the trip west. Hood, one of Lee's hardest hitting division commanders, had been wounded at Gettysburg and was on convalescent leave. His division was made up of such veteran brigades as Henry "Rock" Benning's Georgians, Evander Law's Alabamans and Jerome Robertson's Texans, all of which had so recently struggled for control of Gettysburg's Little Round Top and Devil's Den.

McLaws was also an established fighter, best known for his actions in the defense of Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg. His division included the brigades of Joseph Kershaw's South Carolinians and Benjamin Humphreys' Mississippians. Both had earned their reputation in the Peach Orchard at Gettysburg.

Longstreet's remaining division, under Maj. Gen. George Pickett, was still critically short of officers and men, so Longstreet proposed to leave that division in Richmond. Longstreet also selected two Georgia brigades for the Charleston defenses. A major factor in this decision was a fear of desertion on the trip west as the Georgians moved through their home towns.

Gen. Lee sent President Davis a status report on Wednesday, September 9. He wrote: "I have placed the troops on march toward Richmond. Two divisions will reach Hanover Junction this morning. The third will reach or pass beyond Louisa Court-House today."<sup>31</sup> Davis forwarded the information on to Quartermaster-General Lawton and informed Gen. Lee that Lawton was sending a letter explaining the details of the rail movement south out of Richmond.

Maj. Sims was also busy in his Richmond office on that Wednesday. Telegrams sent out on that day involved the temporary transfer of 20 additional railroad cars to the Wilmington agent, a request to another rail line to borrow "two good engines for a month or so" and instructions to an assistant in Macon, Georgia to return to Richmond.<sup>32</sup>

While much planning and coordination was still ahead, results were already starting to be seen. According to the September 9 diary entry of John Jones, the war department clerk in Richmond, "Troops were arriving all night and to-day (Hood's division), and are proceeding Southward, per railroad, it is said for Tennessee, via Georgia Road." That same day Longstreet's Corps was officially detached for service with the Army of Tennessee.<sup>33</sup> The movement of

Longstreet's Corps to the Battle of Chickamauga was underway.

In retrospect, the decision to execute Longstreet's movement was a political decision; one that had to be made by the President of the Confederacy. The military community was deeply divided over the operation, contributing to "dilatatory consideration and slow acceptance of the proposed strategy." Almost two weeks of high-level meetings were required to reach a decision. By then, enemy activity had changed the situation before the plans were implemented. As one of Longstreet's staff summed up the situation, "there was too little appreciation of the importance of time in the enterprise proposed."<sup>34</sup>

The capture of Knoxville by Federal cavalry played a significant role in making Longstreet's movement only a partial success. Forcing the change to the southern route more than doubled the distance that had to be travelled, but there was an even greater impact on the amount of travel time. While the original northern route had been one continuous rail line, the Confederates were now forced to travel over unconnected routes of differing gauges, belonging to 10 independently owned rail companies. Since the separate lines often did not connect, constant transfers of men and equipment from one train to another also added to

the movement time. Instead of the two to four day operation originally envisioned, seven to ten days would be required. Almost one-half of the force would not arrive in time for the battle.

Planning flexibility and rapid development of alternate courses of action were essential. Almost overnight, new routes were selected and coordination made with rail agents. Equipment was transferred to critical points to overcome shortages. Countless administrative details were worked out by a small, dedicated staff tied together by telegraph lines. The last real chance for the Confederacy was about to board an inefficient, worn-out transportation system for the train ride to Chickamauga.

CHAPTER 2

END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (hereafter O.R.), (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) I, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 721.

<sup>2</sup>Emory M. Thomas, The Confederate Nation: 1861-1865 (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) p. 245.

<sup>3</sup>Mark M. Boatner, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1959) pp. 245-246.

<sup>4</sup>O.R., I, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 640.

<sup>5</sup>Connelly, pp. 100-101.

<sup>6</sup>O.R., I, XX, Pt. 2, pp. 323, 334.

<sup>7</sup>O.R., I, XIV, p. 955.

<sup>8</sup>T. Harry Williams, P.G.T. Beauregard: Napoleon in Gray (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981) p. 183.

<sup>9</sup>O.R., I, XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 933; O.R., I, LI, Pt. 2, pp. 749-750.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 749-750.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 759.

<sup>12</sup>Clifford Dowdey and Louis Manarin (eds.), The Wartime Papers of R.E. Lee (New York: Bramhall House, 1961) p. 595.

<sup>13</sup>O.R., I, LI, Pt. 2, p. 761.

<sup>14</sup>O.R., I, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 694.

<sup>15</sup>John B. Jones, A Rebel War Clerk's Diary (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1866) Vol 2, p. 302.

<sup>16</sup>Dowdey and Manarin, pp. 595-596. The assumption that Lee was at his headquarters on the 4th,

possibly having spent the night of the 3rd there, is based on this letter to his wife; O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 699.

<sup>17</sup>Tucker, p. 92.

<sup>18</sup>John W. Daniel (ed), Life and Reminiscences of Jefferson Davis (New York: Eastern Publishing Co., 1890) pp. 197-198.

<sup>19</sup>W. Buck Yearns (ed.) and John G. Barrett, North Carolina Civil War Documentary (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1980) p. 204.

<sup>20</sup>O.R., 1, XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 453-454.

<sup>21</sup>Sims to Dodamead, September 5, 1863, Sims Letterbook in Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.; Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Jones, p. 33.

<sup>23</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, pp. 700-701. Additional Confederate units, such as Maj. Gen. Buckner from East Tennessee and troops from Johnston's army in Mississippi were also moved to reinforce Bragg.

<sup>24</sup>Sims to Lee, September 7, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>25</sup>O.R., 1, LII, Pt. 2, p. 523.

<sup>26</sup>Sims to Whitford, September 7, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>27</sup>Whitford to Sims, September 7, 1863, MS telegraph receipt in Valentine Museum, Richmond.

<sup>28</sup>Sims to Whitford, September 8, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>29</sup>Sims to Dodamead, September 8, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>30</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 702.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 706.

<sup>32</sup>Sims to Drane, September 9, 1863; Sims to Wallace, September 9, 1863; Sims to Sims, September 9, 1863; Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>33</sup>Jones, p. 37; O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 1, p. 398.

<sup>34</sup>E.P. Alexander, Military Memoirs of a Confederate (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912) pp. 448-449.

### CHAPTER 3

Never before were so many troops moved over such worn-out railways, none first-class from the beginning.<sup>1</sup>

As the critical decisions were being made in Richmond, the soldiers of Longstreet's Corps were encamped in familiar territory along the Rapidan River. They had been in the same positions earlier in the year. Rest and light duty was helping to dim recent memories of Gettysburg's Little Round Top and Devil's Den. Back pay for the months of May and June, plus a new furlough policy also helped the recovery. A revival of religious spirit swelled through their camps as the army regained its morale. A member of an Alabama brigade wrote of twice-daily church meetings, usually followed by baptisms in the nearest river.<sup>2</sup> For the first time in several months, there was a chance to receive and write letters and catch up on the many "housekeeping chores" that garrison duty provided.

The historian of a South Carolina Brigade wrote, "the troops were in the very best of spirits -- no murmers nor complaints. Clothing and provision boxes began coming in from home." In some units new uniforms replaced tattered rags, worn out by the rigors of campaigning. Brigade training and in-ranks inspections

were frequently held, often drawing large crowds from the local female population. A soldier from Mississippi wrote "It is our Gen.s' favorite amusement to drill us in brigade drill." Even a corps-level troop review was held, with Generals Lee and Longstreet personally reviewing the First Corps veterans. That same Mississippi soldier continued, "these are indeed quiet times with the Army of Northern Virginia."<sup>3</sup>

Their quiet ended on September 7, however, as most of Longstreet's Corps received marching orders. Much of that evening was spent cooking three days' rations and preparing to break camp. In one unit a small group of "candidates for baptism," aware of the potential dangers of the upcoming campaign, marched into a swamp about midnight, "found a place suitable for the purpose" and had the "ordinances administered."<sup>4</sup>

Early on September 8, Confederate troops began marching to such rail stations as Bowling Green, Guinea's Station, Hanover Junction, Hamilton's Crossing and Beaver Dam Station. As with most large-scale troop movements, there was some initial confusion. Selected artillery units were ordered to road march to Richmond and then, later on the same day, told to stay where they were "until further orders." Two days later they were again instructed to move to Richmond.<sup>5</sup>

The exact movement plan worked out between Gen. Lee and Quartermaster-General Lawton on the night of September 6 is unknown. Hood's division apparently moved first, with Benning's Georgians, Robertson's Texans and Law's Alabamans leading the way. McLaws' division followed, with Pickett's division bringing up the rear. Most units seem to have traveled to Richmond by rail, using either the Virginia Central Railroad or the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Petersburg line. A few may have marched all the way to the capital.

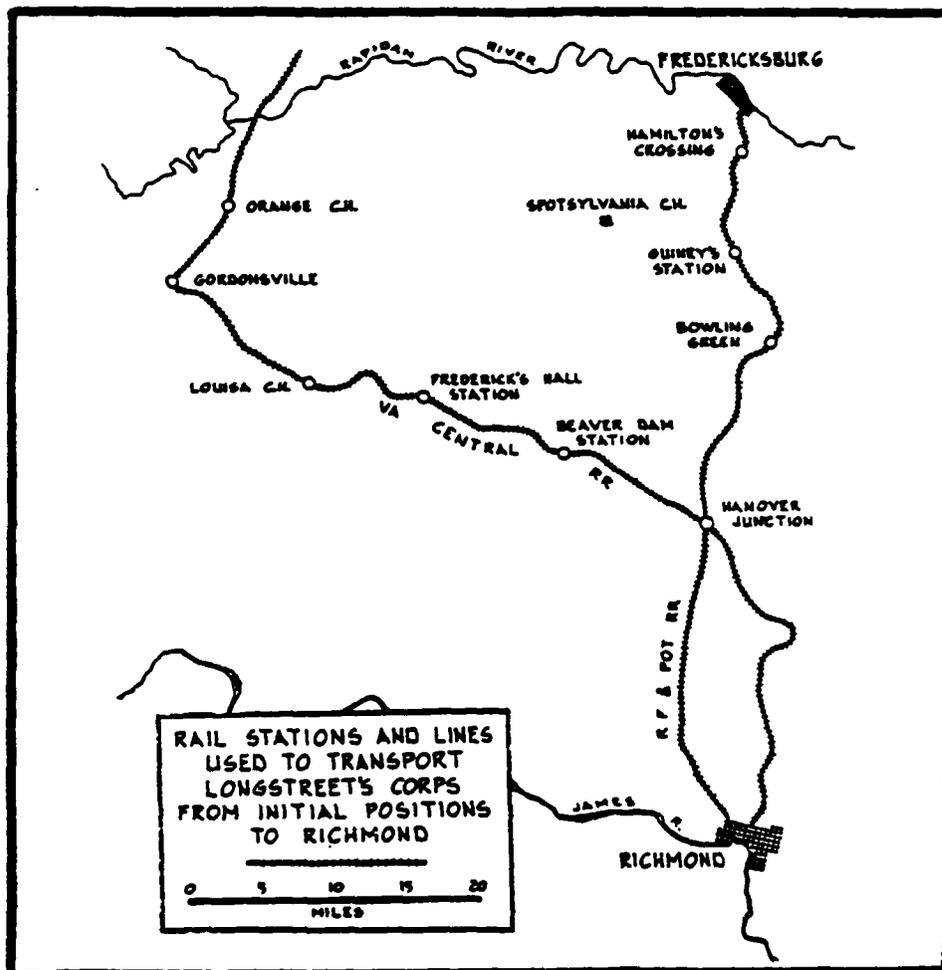


Figure 4

Throughout the evening of September 8 and during most of the following day, troops passed through the streets of Richmond on their way south. Those coming into town on the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac line detrained at the depot on 7th and Broad Streets, while those on the Central line detrained at the Central depot near Broad and 17th Streets. Both groups would then have marched south through the city to connecting lines, and many even crossed the James River into the Manchester section, where small camps sprang up as troops waited for transportation.<sup>6</sup>

Their stay in Richmond was usually short. Since the units would be travelling light, such excess equipment as wagons and horses were turned in to the proper authorities. Some additional units were issued new uniforms for the upcoming campaign. Capt. George Todd, a company commander in the First Texas Regiment, noted that "these, especially the pants, were almost blue."<sup>7</sup>

Maj. Sims, who was responsible for the rail move from Richmond to Atlanta, had gathered every type of serviceable rolling stock imaginable at Richmond and other key stations. As one officer described it, "never before were such crazy cars -- passenger, baggage, mail, coal, box, platform, all and every sort

wabbling on the jumping strap-iron -- used for hauling good soldiers."<sup>8</sup>

The journey to northern Georgia would have many pleasant and often humorous events, but for the most part it was to be a long, uncomfortable journey. Soldiers in the lead trains suffered from the heat, while those near the end of the movement were cold and wet from rain. A general officer complained to the Confederate Inspector General that his men "were required to occupy cars from which horses or cattle had just been taken." Much of the time the soldiers "subsisted on hard-tack and uncooked bacon", one Texan wrote, with little relief "from the constant joltings of springless freight cars running over roadbeds made rough by constant usage, and seldom repaired."<sup>9</sup>

The weather was warm and sunny as men crowded into the cars. Many climbed on top of the boxcars, and some actually rode the entire way in these exposed positions. As often happens, the soldiers did their best to make themselves as comfortable as possible. The trains were barely underway when the troops inside the hot, stuffy boxcars began to tear away the planking. Using axes, bayonets and knives, they quickly stripped the cars down to the framework. This not only provided relief from the heat, it also allowed

them to join the men on top in cheering and waving at the crowds gathered along the track.<sup>10</sup>

By September 9 a fairly constant flow of soldiers was moving south. That evening 1700 troops had already departed Richmond, and the leading elements of Benning's Brigade were passing through Raleigh, North Carolina. Another 1800 soldiers departed Richmond the next morning. Maj. Gen. Hood, still on convalescent leave, visited the Richmond rail terminal and saw a few of his troops preparing to board their trains. At the request of several officers, Hood, who had a well-earned reputation as a hard fighter, decided to rejoin his unit for the movement West. Although not fully recovered from his Gettysburg wound, the division commander had his equipment and favorite horse "Jeff Davis" loaded. The roan horse was also a favorite with Hood's soldiers, as members of his old brigade were convinced that Hood could not be hurt when riding it. When the train pulled out of the station, Hood, and "Jeff Davis," were with the men.<sup>11</sup>

In the meantime, Lt. Gen. Longstreet, who was preparing to move his temporary headquarters to Richmond, had continued making plans. Realizing the great distances and amount of time there would be between the first and last trains, Longstreet gave a special mission to Cpt. Charles M. Blackford, his corps

Judge Advocate. Cpt. Blackford "was told by General Longstreet to go by Lynchburg, and thence to Petersburg, and there wait until the rear of the corps was passing and come on with them, obeying telegraphic orders and reporting progress several times a day; in fact, to act as one of the General's staff on the route, receiving and forwarding such orders as he might send, and keeping him posted as to the progress of the trains conveying the troops." Blackford passed through Petersburg, Wilmington, Augusta and Atlanta, arriving at the headquarters near Chickamauga almost two weeks after the battle.<sup>12</sup>

Before leaving the front line positions for Richmond on September 9 or 10, Longstreet rode to Lee's headquarters to say good-bye. There is no record of the discussion that took place, but the two generals had campaigned on many battlefields, experiencing both victories and defeats together. Since the death of "Stonewall" Jackson, Longstreet was Lee's senior, and most trusted, corps commander. The two did not always agree, as at Gettysburg and again having initially held opposing views on this western movement. Still, there was a close personal relationship between them.

Several weeks earlier Longstreet had outlined to Lee, almost as pre-requisites, the conditions under

which he would take command in the West. As Longstreet later wrote:

To that I consented, provided the change could be so arranged as to give me an opportunity, by careful handling of the troops before accepting battle, to gain their confidence; providing at the same time, that means could be arranged for further aggressive march in case of success.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps these topics were again brought up in the closing discussion in Lee's tent. Following the meeting, as Longstreet prepared to mount his horse, Lee offered a last bit of encouragement, saying "Now, general, you must beat those people out in the West." After a few more words, Longstreet mounted and headed for Richmond.<sup>14</sup>

In the meantime, Maj. Sims and his assistants continued to work through numerous technical and administrative difficulties. Keeping trains on schedule was difficult as the worn-out, overworked engines frequently broke down or jumped their tracks. The daily passage reports that Sims had requested from his agents helped to maintain at least some accountability and control. Since the railroads were commercial couriers, and not owned by the Confederate Government, Sims had little real authority over the companies. Yet their cooperation was essential to the

movement's success. Only one line, the Richmond & Petersburg, presented problems by raising its rates because of the additional services required.<sup>15</sup>

Overall, the cooperation was outstanding, even though the companies struggled under the size of the movement. Routine services were reduced or temporarily eliminated, and traffic going the opposite direction was often sidetracked. A surgeon from a North Carolina unit, Dr. J.F. Shaffner, was attempting to go from Greensboro through Richmond to rejoin his unit on the Rapidan River. "Meeting many trains heavily laden with troops", he missed a connecting train at Raleigh because his east-bound train was 12 hours behind schedule.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, management problems frequently hampered effective service. Brig. Gen. Henry A. Wise was so outraged at the lack of supervision that he wrote:

The R.R. is either under the charge of the gov<sup>t</sup>. or of the Company; if of the former its officers and agents ought to be held to strict accountability; if of the latter, the Company is a contractor with the Gov<sup>t</sup>. and ought to be made to meet the conditions of the contract.<sup>17</sup>

As with most large-scale military operations of this nature, secrecy was vital, yet difficult to attain. No doubt many civilians with Union sympathies

observed the numerous troop trains all along the route. Surprisingly, there was little coverage in the Southern newspapers to give away much information. The Georgia Railroad placed a notice in the September 10 issue of the Augusta Constitutionalist, stating that "No freight will be received for points above Rutledge until further notice." The South Carolina Railroad Company placed special notices in the September 11 edition of the same paper, and the September 12 issue of Columbia's Daily Southern Guardian, notifying its customers that the night passenger trains would be temporarily suspended from the entire line, due to increased demands of the government.<sup>18</sup>

The September 9 issue of the New York Herald contained a fairly accurate analysis of Confederate strengths under the headline "General Lee's Rebel Army. Its Composition, Strength and Commanders. Probable Movement of Lee's Forces. The Reported Plan of the Fall Campaign of the Rebels." The article included the statement: "It appears that some of Lee's best regiments, horse, foot and artillery, have been sent southward, but whether to Charleston or Chattanooga, we have yet to learn." Rumors concerning this story prompted Gen. Lee to write President Davis, "I have been informed that the N.Y. Herald, of the 9th instant, contained the movement of Longstreet's corps in the

order in which his divisions moved, and even contained the announcement that two of his brigades would probably stop in Richmond and Wise's and Jenkins' take their places." Although the story was not that detailed or accurate, the concerned commander went on to state, "I only communicated the movement to the Quartermaster-General on the night of the 6th instant, and it must have reached New York on the 7th or 8th in order to be in the Herald of the 9th. I fear that there has been great imprudence in talking on the part of our people, or that there may be improper persons among the officers or railroad clerks."<sup>19</sup>

In actuality, the Union intelligence system was slow to discover the Confederate operation. In fact, on September 11, the Union General-in-Chief, Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck, was as far off base as possible when he telegraphed Maj. Gen. Rosecrans from the War Department, stating "It is reported here by deserters that a part of Bragg's army is re-enforcing Lee." Four days later in a message to Maj. Gen. Meade, commander of the Union Army of the Potomac, Halleck was much closer to reality when he mentioned measures "to meet the contingency of the probable re-enforcement of Bragg by a part of Lee's army."<sup>20</sup>

By September 16, the Federals began to assemble reliable information. On that day, Maj. Gen. John G.

Foster, commander of the Union Department of Virginia and North Carolina, received several reports of the movement from subordinates. He informed Halleck that "Fresh reports continue to come in, establishing the fact that a considerable force of Lee's army has passed to the south and southwest, principally to Chattanooga."<sup>21</sup>

But not all of the reports were completely accurate. Foster had received one from Maj. Gen. John J. Peck, a district commander, that included the statement "In all this movement, which is estimated at 30,000, I am very certain that General Hood's division is to remain in North Carolina for the purpose of collecting deserters from Lee's army." Another one, from the commander of Union forces at Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia, was even less accurate. It recounted the story of a Mrs. Charles Swartz, who claimed to be a Union spy who had traveled from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and now had important information to take to Washington. According to the message, she "states that the whole rebel army is on its way to Tennessee. Virginia is to be evacuated. She saw in Petersburg General Robert Lee; badly wounded at Charleston; not expected to live."<sup>22</sup>

The Union intelligence system may have even succeeded in placing a spy on board one of Longstreet's

trains. According to one account the spy, named Philip Henson, had been sent to Richmond to gather details on the movement. "Henson returned with Longstreet, whose confidence he gained, as that Confederate officer came west to reenforce Bragg." Henson left the train in Jonesboro, and was able to pass information on to his superiors. Apparently this information, like most of the other intelligence, either did not reach Rosecrans, or he chose not to believe it.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, as Longstreet's lead elements continued to move west, he was busy making final arrangements from his temporary headquarters at the Spotswood Hotel in Richmond. It is likely that he had been unaware of the change from the original Knoxville route to the southern rail routes until he arrived in the capital city. In later years he would bitterly write, "these facts were known to the Richmond authorities at the time of our movements, but not to General Lee or myself until the move was so far advanced as to prevent recall." In light of the recognized need for a rapid movement, this information must have been disconcerting. But it might have been offset somewhat by the affectionate heroes welcome he received in Richmond. On September 12 Longstreet informed Lee of some last minute changes to his troop list and made a tactical recommendation for the defense of Richmond by

Lee's depleted army. He added "If I did not think our move a necessary one, my regrets at leaving you would be distressing to me, as it seems to be with the officers and men of my command. Believing it to be necessary, I hope to accept it and my other personal inconveniences cheerfully and hopefully." He also wrote a personal note to his friend Senator Wigfall, stating "Hood's Division are en route and the most of my command are rapidly moving on to Bragg. I hope that we may be with him in ten days more."<sup>24</sup>

The question of artillery also had to be resolved. Longstreet planned to take three battalions of artillery on the trains, but the problem was transporting the large number of horses. Lee had informed Davis on September 10, that "Three battalions of artillery are ordered to Richmond. Their horses cannot accompany the guns farther, and their guns should not be forwarded unless horses can be obtained at the scene of operations." Working through his corps artillery chief, Col. J. B. Walton, Longstreet ordered these units on September 12 to proceed to Petersburg and occupy camps "convenient to supplies of forage and subsistence."<sup>25</sup> According to movement data provided in Artillery Corps Special Order #17, the order of movement out of Petersburg would be Col. E.P. Alexander's battalion, followed by Maj. James Dearing's

battalion, and then the Washington Artillery, commanded by Maj. B. F. Eshleman. The unusually detailed order also instructed that:

The guns and their equipment complete, including harness and the ammunition in the chests, will be sent forward. In shipping the armament and property the arrangement should be to send sufficient detachments under commissioned officers with them to transfer them at the several points required. The men will be required to be kept upon the cars, and when at depots or places where changes are to be made they will be prohibited from straggling or leaving the places designated by the commanding officer for them to remain until their departure. The camp equipages of the several commands and all quartermasters' stores necessary to their efficiency in the field, in view of immediate operations, will be transported with the troops. When ordered, the battery horses and other public horses, the wagons, ambulances, and teams will be turned in to the quartermaster authorized to receive and receipt for them at Petersburg.<sup>26</sup>

With most of the detailed planning completed, Longstreet and members of his staff boarded their train on Monday, September 14. The lead elements of the corps, Benning's and Robertson's Brigades, arrived in Atlanta that same day.

But the artillery matter was still not completely settled. Gen. Lee again informed President Davis on September 14 that the three battalions had been sent to Richmond, this time adding, "I think before they go it should be fully ascertained whether they can obtain

horses for them in that region. If this cannot be done it would be worse than useless to carry them, as they would not only undergo the wear and tear and damage of transportation, but we might possibly lose them."<sup>27</sup> On September 16, Davis replied to Lee:

In relation to the guns of General Longstreet's corps, I had taken the same view which you present, and upon inquiry have learned that a supply of artillery horses were to be obtained at Atlanta. On account of the necessity for rapid operations and the delays consequent upon insufficient transportation, I suggested to General Longstreet the propriety of supplying himself with guns, if practicable, from those in depot at Atlanta and at Augusta.<sup>28</sup>

To obtain additional information, Davis also telegraphed Bragg on September 16, asking "Have you sufficient guns to furnish to the reinforcements going to you, without waiting for the batteries left here to be sent on?" The next day, September 17, Col. Alexander's battalion of 26 guns was loaded on trains and departed Petersburg around 4 p.m. That same day Bragg, from his headquarters at Lafayette, Georgia, responded to the President's question concerning artillery, saying "We can do with what we have as the country is unfavorable to the use of artillery."<sup>29</sup>

With that information, Davis personally resolved the question of how much artillery would go with

Longstreet. On September 18 Davis' Adjutant General, Samuel Cooper, informed Longstreet's Artillery Chief that "none of the horses belonging to the artillery battalion of Longstreet's corps are to be sent by railroad west, and that none of the battalions with the exception of Alexander's will be sent west until further orders. The horses of Alexander's battalion will be retained here."<sup>30</sup>

Col. Alexander's battalion arrived at Ringgold Station, Georgia at 2 a.m. on September 25. They had covered almost 850 miles in seven days and 10 hours. But at that point they were 12 miles from the battlefield, and five days after the Battle of Chickamauga had ended.<sup>31</sup>

While all this coordination was going on, troop trains continued to rumble westward. By September 12, along the coastal route, Anderson's Brigade and a regiment of Kershaw's Brigade had passed through Wilmington. The next day another 1500 men took the ferry across the Cape Fear River and put Wilmington behind them. They were followed by an additional 1700 troops on the 14th. That same day on the other route, 1700 troops also moved through Charlotte, North Carolina. On the 15th another 500 men plus 12 carloads of horses and baggage moved through that city, followed by 2000 men on the 17th and 800 more on the 18th.<sup>32</sup>

A woman who saw a loaded troop train pass near Kingsville, South Carolina, wrote, "it was a strange sight--miles, apparently, of platform cars--soldiers rolled in their blankets, lying in rows, heads and all covered, fast asleep. In their gray blankets, packed in regular order, they looked like swathed mummies....A feeling of awful depression laid hold of me. All these fine fellows going to kill or be killed. Why?"<sup>33</sup>

Such depressing thoughts had no doubt crossed the minds of a few of the soldiers. One described his group as "all happy lords, yet knowing at the same time that we were going right into another big killing and that many of us would go to our long homes."<sup>34</sup>

But there was little time to pursue those thoughts. Too many things were going on and, in spite of the uncomfortable surroundings, there was plenty of fun to be had. In fact, according to a modern work on Civil War railroads, "the trip degenerated into a home-coming celebration mixed with a burlesque of a movement of an army by rail." "The news of our coming had preceded us, "one soldier noted, "and at every station and road crossing the people of the surrounding country...crowded to see us pass." In many respects the ride did begin to take on an almost carnival-like atmosphere. A member of Kershaw's Brigade wrote, "Our whole trip was one grand ovation. Old men slapped

their hands in praise, boys threw up their hats in joy, while the ladies fanned the breeze with their flags and handkerchiefs."<sup>35</sup>

According to an Alabama officer in Law's Brigade, "The boys amused themselves with loud cheering as we flew past bevyies of beautiful ladies who waved their snow white handkerchiefs to us." On a car loaded with Texans from Robertson's Brigade, there was "one fellow playing a fiddle; another fellow down in the car blowing a horn." Waving to the women became more and more refined as the trip progressed. The Alabama officer later recorded that some soldiers, including his brother Rufus, began writing notes and "throwing them to some young ladies as they past. Roof who you know is a great ladies man wrote one, and threw it to a young lady at Covington, Georgia, and behold, a few days ago he received a rather lengthy reply."<sup>36</sup>

Marching through the various towns from one train station to another sometimes provided diversions for the soldiers. The following example is from a local newspaper:

While Longstreet's corps was passing through Columbia, a soldier stepped into a store and called for a pair of boots. A pair was handed out and the price demanded.  
"Sixty dollars," said the merchant.  
"Mighty high," replied the soldier.  
"Tell me of anything that is not high,"

responded the merchant, "and I will make you a present of the boots."  
"A soldier's wages, sir," promptly replied the soldier.  
"Take the boots," said the merchant, and the soldier marched off with them, leaving the merchant quite convinced that "the boot was on the right foot."<sup>37</sup>

At almost every designated stop, local civilians, especially the ladies, were present with food. It is difficult to know which was more important to the soldiers, because of all the topics mentioned in accounts of the train ride, the women and the food are the most plentiful. John Coxe, a member of Kershaw's Brigade, remembered, "All things good to eat seemed to be there in great plenty, and at first some of us wondered whether we were still in our own beloved South....perhaps the best of all to at least many of us was the galaxy of fine and beautiful young Southern women who served us." A Mississippi soldier who would die five days later at Chickamauga wrote, "The ladies are out to-night to welcome us...God bless the ladies." At a stop in North Carolina, a member of the 4th Texas "found to our great joy and surprise a long table spread with goodies...prepared by the ladies of Sumpterville." Another Texan was so overwhelmed by the numerous gatherings that he wrote, "It is useless to enter into incidents; suffice it to say that the

reception all through the state was all that the speed and confusion would allow."<sup>38</sup>

The excitement and enthusiasm along the route was so intense that two men in Augusta, Georgia enlisted in Company A, 15th Alabama as it passed through the town. While both men were present at the start of Chickamauga, their enthusiasm was quickly dampened. One deserted on September 20 after only five days of service, and the second abandoned the cause in December 1863.<sup>39</sup>

But the good times were also accompanied by the bad. The large-scale movement of troops often involves accidents and injuries, and the train ride to Chickamauga was no exception. Some were minor, such as a broken leg and bruises caused by a train jumping the track. Others were more serious. Assistant surgeon of the 1st Texas, Andrew C. Crombie, was reported "killed in a train wreck on the way to Georgia for the battle of Chickamauga." Pvt A.J. Scott, also of Robertson's Brigade, fell from a moving rail car and was crushed to death.<sup>40</sup>

But by far the most serious accident involved a head-on collision near Allatoona Pass, Georgia on Sunday, September 13. According to newspaper accounts, the locomotive Senator, engineered by a Mr. Schofield, pulled out of the Atlanta station headed north toward

Bragg's army. The train carried troops of the 1st Tennessee Battalion and the 10th and 50th Tennessee Regiments. A few miles above Marietta, Georgia, the train ran off the track, but was again underway late in the afternoon. In the meantime, the locomotive Chieftain, lightly loaded with a few sick and injured soldiers from Bragg's army, was pulling 15 cars southward on the same line. The engineer, Mr. Howden, had been incorrectly informed by an agent that the track was clear. The two trains met on a curve, head-on, at full speed. Casualties were 18 killed and 67 injured. A newspaper correspondent, who arrived on the scene, wrote of the destruction and loss of life. "One soldier was caught between the tender and engine by the thigh. No efforts could extricate him and he burned to death against the engine." At least one north-bound train was delayed the following day while the wreckage was cleared.<sup>41</sup>

Discipline during the movement posed some interesting problems for the officers and NCOs. Many units passed through their home towns, which according to Longstreet "gave us some little trouble in keeping our men on the cars." A senior member of Longstreet's staff naively wrote "there were no desertions", and a soldier in Kershaw's Brigade, during a sentimental moment, noted that "many a mother dropped a silent tear

or felt a heart-ache as she saw her long absent soldier boy flying pass without a word or a kiss." But straggling, both accidental and intentional, and probably some desertions did occur. Lt. Robert A. Moore of McLaws' Division went into the city of Columbia with some friends. He matter-of-factly reported in his diary entry of September 15 that "The train left us & we have had to remain here all day....Have spent the day quite agreeably." A member of Robertson's Brigade wrote about being detained for two hours in Augusta, Georgia. "That is," he added, "the Regiment was detained that long, but as for me and three others, we were left behind accidentally and remained in the city until the evening Express went out. We dined at the best hotel and visited the city generally." The Texan went on to report "before we were permitted to take the evening train, we were required to get transportation from the Provost Marshal. This was a little unexpected and caused us some trouble."<sup>42</sup>

But there was other trouble during the troop movement of a more serious nature. Late in the evening of September 9, only one day into the movement, lead elements of Benning's Brigade were in Raleigh. Apparently some members of a Georgia Regiment went into town and ransacked the office of the Standard. The

newspaper, which did not always support the Confederate cause, had recently published stories glorifying the acts of North Carolina troops at the expense of soldiers from other states. Governor Zebulon Vance, who was in the city at the time, frantically telegraphed President Davis, "For God's sake save us from this state of things" by placing the city off limits to the soldiers. Disorder continued the following day, as a mob of citizens retaliated by destroying the State Journal. Vance again telegraphed Davis, blowing the situation out of proportion by threatening to destroy the railroad bridges leading into the city and to recall all North Carolina soldiers for local defense. Davis instructed the Raleigh Quartermaster to not detain troops in the city, and to inform each unit commander that troops were not to be allowed in the city. Tensions soon eased and order was restored.<sup>43</sup>

Another major incident occurred, this time in Wilmington on the evening of September 10. During a 24-hour stop-over in that city, members of Robertson's Texas Brigade investigated the local establishments of Paddy's Hollow, which has been described as "an unsavory waterfront section of town." The local town guard, composed of a few elderly gentlemen, was called in to quiet the "boisterous, obnoxious and abusive"

soldiers. A modern historian of the Texas Brigade described the incident that followed:

Robertson's men peering through blood-shot eyes apparently mistook the blue uniformed lawmen for Yankees for they immediately formed a battle line, raised the rebel yell and staggered to the charge. One constable, said to be in his late fifties, was badly banged and beaten by hooks, jabs and uppercuts, another was knocked down by a shillelagh blow over the ear, while a third police officer suffered two knife wounds in his side. The town's roughed-up nocturnal guardians limped a hasty retreat carrying their wounded with them and left the water-front to the Lone Star victors. No arrests were made or charges filed. The Texas Brigade boarded their dilapidated box cars the next morning and headed west.<sup>44</sup>

There were countless delays along the route due to the poor condition of the rail equipment. Scenes of soldiers forming bucket brigades to fill boilers from nearby creeks were common. One soldier wrote, "the engine drawing our train was in bad order, and slow progress and many stops to allow the engineer to 'tinker' with his machine greatly delayed us." When that particular engine finally gave out, the train was side-tracked and a telegraph sent for a replacement engine. The same soldier continued, "But, dear me! Our new machine seemed in worse condition than that hooked to our train. It was old, wheezy, and leaked steam in many places, while the water gushed from the

tender in several streams." Most of the time the worn-out equipment took a while, but got the job done. A member of Kershaw's Brigade noted, "Our little engine, named 'Kentucky,' was too light for the weight of our train and had much difficulty climbing grades." At Allatoona Mountain "she made three efforts before she made it up to the station at the top by daylight."<sup>45</sup> Some of these maintenance stops had their amusing moments:

One long stop was made in front of a large turpentine distillery, not then in operation. Hundreds of barrels of resin were stacked up, and turpentine covered the ground in many places. It was quite cold, and some of the men set fire to a few barrels of resin. Soon the fire spread and couldn't be controlled. General Kershaw delivered a lecture in which he enjoined the men in future to be more careful of the preservation of private property. As our train started ahead, the fire reached the distillery and buildings, and doubtless all were completely consumed.<sup>46</sup>

Troops from "Rock" Benning's Brigade were the first of Longstreet's Corps to reach Atlanta, closely followed by Robertson's and Law's Brigades. Arriving on the evening of September 12, the lead elements set up camp near the rail depot. According to a member of Robertson's Brigade, "The excitement in that city was

at a high pitch. Fighting had already begun at Chattanooga and troops were leaving hourly. The enemy was advancing and the citizens were wild with fright."<sup>47</sup>

By the 19th Maj. Gen. McLaws had reached Atlanta and taken a room at the Trout House, where he was "blessed with a really sound sleep...not being disturbed but once, and that by a rat, which I found located under my pillow...." Administrative matters occupied his time, as he continued:

My room has literally been besieged by applicant(s) for leave of absence, if but for one day, for husbands or sons to visit their parents & families, all of which I have had to refuse. Many men I am sorry to say have gone off without permission, all of them however to return in a day or two, so I am told and sincerely hope.<sup>48</sup>

Maj. Sims' control of the movement ended at Atlanta. From there on up the Western & Atlantic line to the final detrain points near Catoosa Station and Ringgold, transportation was run by Col. J.P. Jones of Gen. Bragg's staff. Jones, whose initial headquarters were in Resaca, Georgia, was assisted by the local Atlanta commander, Col. M.H. Wright. Wright organized and executed the movement north from Atlanta, keeping Bragg's headquarters informed of troop departures by telegraph. He faced the difficult task of trying to

move large numbers of troops with an insufficient amount of rolling stock. Delays were common. A colonel from Longstreet's 15th Alabama wrote of loosing almost a full day in Atlanta while his unit waited their turn to board the train. On at least one occasion Wright had trouble keeping local commanders from taking control of his rail cars. On September 19 he informed Col. Jones, who had moved to Tunnel Hill, Georgia, "Two trains of empty cars were seized at Resaca yesterday and not allowed to come down, and it interferes greatly with movement of troops. Please have cars promptly returned."<sup>49</sup>

Although Gen. Bragg had directed that all troops be forwarded immediately upon their arrival, many of Benning's troops were without shoes or rations. While Benning drew supplies from the Atlanta warehouses, Robertson's 1300 men boarded trains and headed north on the evening of September 14. Benning's and Law's Brigades followed the next evening, and by the morning of the 18th, 4500 troops had detrained at the small platform and woodshed known as Catoosa Station. These three brigades would participate in some action the afternoon and evening of the 18th and all day of the 19th. Elements of Kershaw's Brigade filtered in throughout the evening of the 18th and Humphreys' Brigade was not far behind. These two brigades would

fight on the 20th. The four other brigades of infantry under Jenkins, Wofford, Bryan and Anderson, plus Alexander's artillery battalion, arrived after the battle.<sup>50</sup>

As lead elements of Longstreet's Corps moved into battle and the last of his troops began passing through Catoosa Station, the rail movement came to a close. Depending on exactly which route they had taken, most of the units had traveled over 950 miles since leaving their camps in Virginia. The routes had been owned by at least eight different companies, consisted of two different sizes of track gauge, and included at least eight major transfer points. As one modern historian recapped, "The wonder of the whole thing is that it took but nine days to complete the journey."<sup>51</sup>

There had been many problems. Transportation limitations had, from the start, placed constraints on the amount and type of material moved. Wagons, ambulances, much of the artillery and other types of rolling stock which required large numbers of horses, were left behind in Virginia. This placed an additional burden on the logisticians after the troops arrived in Georgia. Trains had broken down; accidents had resulted in some deaths and injury; incidents between soldiers and civilians had caused tense moments; and some degree of straggling had presented

control problems for unit leadership and local provost marshals.

But there had also been many successes. Almost overnight the planners had patched together a command and control network over the southern rail route. Rations during the journey, whether by accident or design, were greatly supplemented by an outpouring of meals from the civilian communities, greatly improving troop morale. Broken down locomotives were repaired or replaced; derailed and overturned cars were uprighted and put back on the tracks; small numbers of stragglers were rounded up and, in spite of all the problems, a significant number of troops arrived in time to fight. Estimates on the total number of troops involved in the movement vary. Early messages from Maj. Sims placed the planning figures at between 18,000 and 20,000, however, best estimates place the actual number at closer to 12,000 to 15,000. Of these, about one half arrived in time to take part in the battle. The fact that even those forces made it in time is, as one scholar stated, "a tremendous tribute to Lawton and the courageous railroaders who made up trains from anything that would roll and kept them moving over tracks scarcely worthy of the name."<sup>52</sup> Their dedication enabled Longstreet and about 7000 officers and men from

the Army of Northern Virginia to play an important role  
at Chickamauga.

## CHAPTER 3

### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>G. Moxley Sorrel, Recollections of a Confederate Staff Officer (New York: The Neale Pub. Co., 1917), p. 185.

<sup>2</sup>Turner Vaughan, "Diary of Turner Vaughan, Co. C., 4th Ala. Reg., CSA, 4 Mar 1863-12 Feb 1864," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XVIII (1956), pp. 594-595.

<sup>3</sup>Augustus Dickert, History of Kershaw's Brigade (Dayton: Morningside Bookshop Press, 1976), p. 262; Robert A. Moore, A Life for the Confederacy (Jackson: McCowat-Mercer Press, Inc., 1959), pp. 163-164.

<sup>4</sup>William C. Jordan, Some Events and Incidents During the Civil War (Montgomery: The Paragon Press, 1909), p. 50.

<sup>5</sup>O.R., 1, LI, Pt. 2, pp. 763-764.

<sup>6</sup>Jones, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup>Moore, p. 164; George T. Todd, First Texas Regiment (Waco: Texian Press, 1963), p. 17.

<sup>8</sup>Sorrel, p. 185.

<sup>9</sup>Wise to Cooper, September 16, 1863, John D. Whitford Papers, in Department of Cultural Resources, Archives and Records Section, Raleigh, N. C.; Joseph B. Polley, Hood's Texas Brigade (Dayton: Morningside Bookshop Press, 1976), pp. 198-199.

<sup>10</sup>Dickert, p. 263; Calvin L. Collier, They'll Do To Tie To! The Story of the 3rd Regiment, Arkansas Infantry, CSA (Little Rock: Pioneer Press, 1959), p. 154; Robert C. Black, The Railroads of the Confederacy (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1952), p. 187.

<sup>11</sup>Sims to Whitford, September 10, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library; Black, p. 187. The

horse, "Jeff Davis", had been lame at Gettysburg, so Hood was on another mount when he received his wound at that battle. At Chickamauga, the horse had been severely wounded on the 19th, so, on September 20th, Hood was again on another animal when he received the wound that resulted in his leg amputation. John B. Hood, Advance and Retreat: Personal Experiences in the US and CS Armies (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1959), p. 61, 64-65.

<sup>12</sup>Susan L. Blackford, Memoirs of Life in and out of the Army in Virginia During the War Between the States (Privately printed by J.P. Bell Co., 1894-96) p. 138.

<sup>13</sup>James Longstreet, From Manassas To Appomattox (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1896), p. 434.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 437. At this point in the war, Longstreet had an excellent reputation as a reliable, hard fighter. Accusations of delay at Gettysburg, and the reputation of being slow and stubborn came after Lee's death in 1870.

<sup>15</sup>Sims to Drane, Sharp, Peake, September 11, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library. Black, p. 186.

<sup>16</sup>J.F. Shaffner, Diary of Dr. J.F. Shaffner, Sr. Sept 13, 1863 to Feb 5, 1865 Privately published, no date. Copy in N.C. State Library, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>Wise to Cooper, September 16, 1863, John D. Whitford Papers, Raleigh, N.C.

<sup>18</sup>Augusta Constitutionalist, September 10, 1863; Ibid., September 11, 1863; Daily Southern Guardian, September 12, 1863.

<sup>19</sup>New York Herald, September 9, 1863, pp. 4-6; O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, pp. 719-720.

<sup>20</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 3, p. 530; O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 187.

<sup>21</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 199.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.; Ibid., pp. 199-200.

<sup>23</sup>Jacob R. Perkins, Trails, Rails and War: The Life of General G.M. Dodge (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1929), p. 112.

<sup>24</sup>O.R., 1, LI, Pt. 2, p. 763. Longstreet's headquarters being located at the Spotswood Hotel is an assumption, based on the instructions to Alexander; Longstreet, p. 436; Douglas S. Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), Vol. III, p. 225; O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, pp. 713-714; Wright, p. 149.

<sup>25</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 708; O.R., 1, LI, Pt. 2, p. 766.

<sup>26</sup>O.R., 1, LI, Pt. 2, pp. 766-777.

<sup>27</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 719.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 725-726.

<sup>29</sup>Dunbar Rowland (ed.), Jefferson Davis Constitutional. His Letters, Papers and Speeches (Jackson: J.J. Little & Ives, 1923), Vol. VI, p. 35; Alexander, p. 449; Bragg to Davis, September 17, 1863, Braxton Bragg Papers, William R. Perkins Library, Duke Univ., Durham, N. C.

<sup>30</sup>O.R., 1, LI, Pt. 2, p. 768. The question of artillery horses continued to be discussed for some time. On September 24, four days after the battle was over, Longstreet's Chief of Artillery wrote his commander from Richmond: "Saw the President. He is still opposed to Alexander's horses going. Thinks they will be of no service when they reach you. Says, if possible, horses must be obtained there. Finally, if absolutely necessary, he will order them sent by rail. Awaiting your orders to join you." Ibid., p. 528.

<sup>31</sup>Alexander, p. 449.

<sup>32</sup>MS telegraphic passing reports, Railroad Bureau telegraph file, Valentine Museum, Richmond.

<sup>33</sup>C. Vann Woodward (ed.), Mary Chesnut's Civil War (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1981), p. 470.

<sup>34</sup>J.M. Polk, The Confederate Soldier and Ten Years in South America (Austin: Press of Von Boeckmann Jones Co., 1910), p. 23.

35Turner, p. 284; Dickert, p. 264.

36W. Stanley Hoole, "The Letters of Cpt. Joab Goodson, 1862-1864," Alabama Review, X, (April 1957), p. 149; Polk, p. 23; Hoole, p. 149-150.

37Augusta Constitutionalist, October 1, 1863.

38John Coxe, "Chickamauga," Confederate Veteran, XXX (August) 1922, p. 291; Moore, p. 166; Val C. Giles, Rags and Hope (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1961) p. 196; John C. West, A Texan in Search of a Fight (Waco: Texian Press, 1969), p. 111.

39William C. Oates, The War Between the Union and the Confederacy (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1905), pp. 577, 580-581.

40Augusta Constitutionalist, September 16, 1863; Harold B. Simpson, Hood's Texas Brigade: A Compendium (Hillsboro: Hill Jr. College Press, 1977), p. 557; Harold B. Simpson (ed.), Touched With Valor: Civil War Papers and Casualty Reports of Hood's Texas Brigade, written and collected by General Jerome B. Robertson, (Hillsboro: Hill Jr. College Press, 1964), p. 77;

41Daily Southern Guardian, September 19, 1863; Augusta Constitutionalist, September 16, 1863.

42Longstreet, p. 437; Sorrel, p. 187; Dickert, p. 264; Moore, p. 166; Giles, p. 198.

43O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt 2, p. 710, 723; OR, 1, LI, Pt 2, pp. 763-765; The Daily Journal, (Wilmington, N.C.), September 12, 1863.

44Harold B. Simpson, Gaines' Mill to Appomattox (Waco: Texian Press, 1963), pp. 153-154; The Daily Journal, (Wilmington, N.C.), September 11, 1863.

45Coxe, p. 291-292.

46Ibid.

47Giles, p. 198.

48McLaws to wife, September 19, 1863, Lafayette McLaws' Papers, #472, Manuscripts Department, Library, Univ. of N.C., Chapel Hill.

49 Oates, p. 253; O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 4, p. 672.

50 O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 4, pp. 647-649, 652, 672.

51 Simpson, Gaines' Mill, p. 152.

52 Turner, p. 285.

## CHAPTER 4

There must be a "fight or a foot-race" soon in Northern Georgia.<sup>1</sup>

"It was about three o'clock in the afternoon of September 19," according to a staff officer accompanying Lt. Gen. Longstreet, "that our rickety train pulled up, with jerks and bangs, at the little railway landing, called Catoosa Platform." Having left Richmond on Monday, September 14, the trip from Virginia had taken the general six full days. Traveling on the coastal route, on Tuesday he had gone through Wilmington, North Carolina and Kingsville, South Carolina on Wednesday.<sup>2</sup> As he passed through Augusta, Georgia, most probably on the 17th, he may have thought back to earlier times. As a youth he had lived in that city with his uncle. He had gone to school there, and, in fact, had only moved to Alabama so that he could get an appointment to West Point from that state in 1838. He may also have thought about how strange the war was, as he was now riding to fight against his old West Point roommate, Maj. Gen. Rosecrans, commander of the Union forces opposing Bragg.

As Longstreet stepped from the train at Catoosa Station, the immediate area was full of activity. The sounds of battle could be heard in the distance as his soldiers were detraining, organizing and marching to join the fight. Since his units had no transportation, excess wagons and teams of horses from Bragg's supply trains were being rounded up to provide some sort of logistical transportation.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, there was no waiting courier or message from Gen. Bragg for the newly arrived commander from Virginia.

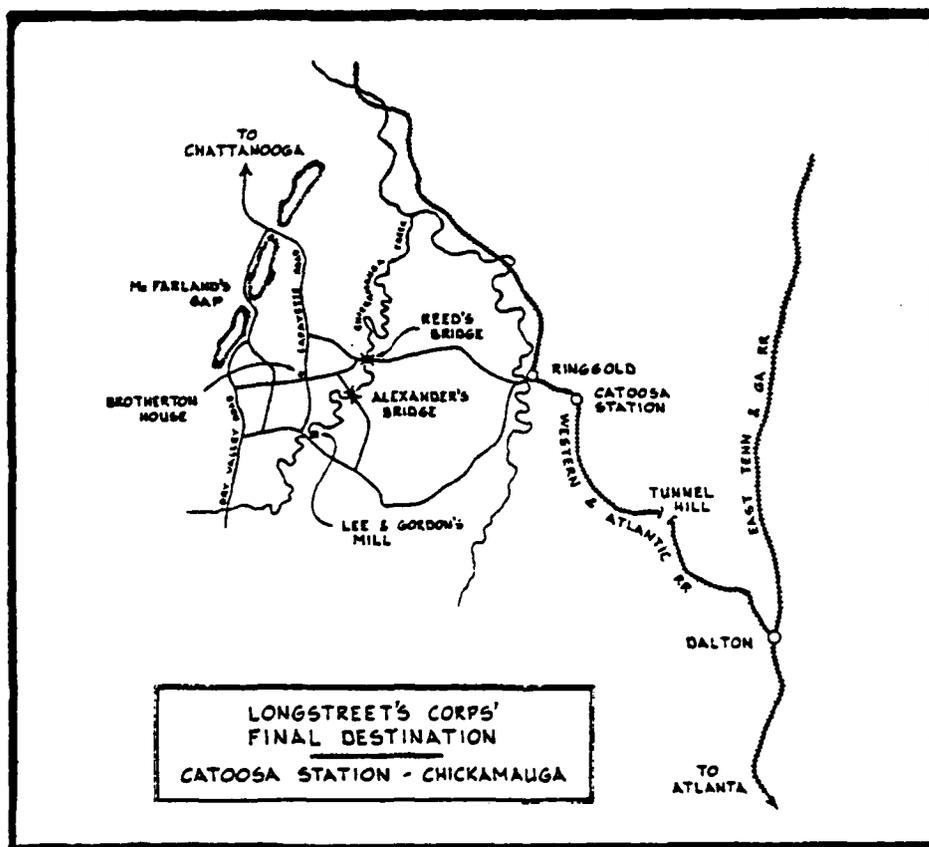


Figure 5

Within an hour another train arrived from Atlanta, carrying other staff members and some officers' horses. Directions to follow the main road were obtained from someone, and Longstreet, accompanied only by Col. G. Moxley Sorrel, his Chief of Staff, and his Chief of Ordnance, Col. P.T. Manning, departed in search of Bragg's headquarters. Along the way they continued to hear the sounds of battle and could see wounded soldiers and wagons moving to their right. The sun set and Longstreet and his staff continued on the main road in the bright moonlight. Suddenly, at one point they were challenged by a picket sentry. They could see some kind of obstructions in the road ahead of them. Unsure of the situation, Longstreet asked the guard what unit he was in. The response was a brigade and division number. Realizing that Confederate units were normally known by the name of their commander, Longstreet assumed he was in the middle of a Union picket post. Maintaining the coolness for which he was known, Longstreet loudly said, "Let us ride down a little way to find a better crossing." The three horsemen moved toward some large trees and, under their cover, retraced part of their route, moving in the direction from which they had earlier seen men and wagons moving.<sup>4</sup>

After seven hours of wandering "by various roads and across small streams through the growing darkness of the Georgia forest," the party found the headquarters of the Army of Tennessee around 11 o'clock that night. Bragg, who was asleep in the back of an ambulance, was awakened and the two generals met for about an hour. Longstreet was brought up to date on the earlier action of the 18th and 19th, learning that several of his veteran brigades had already seen action. He was informed that late that evening Bragg had reorganized the army's entire command structure. Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, with Lt. Gen. D.H. Hill now under him, would command the right wing of the Confederate line. Lt. Gen. Longstreet was given command of the left wing. He was also given a map of prominent terrain features and informed of Bragg's battle plan. As Longstreet later described the plan, "In general terms, it was to cross the Chickamauga, strike the enemy's left, and roll it back on his right by a wheel to the left so as to come in between the enemy and Chattanooga." According to Bragg, the attack on the 20th would begin from the Confederate right, at dawn.<sup>5</sup>

Following the meeting, Longstreet asked if there were any soldiers in the command who were familiar with the terrain. He was given the name of Tom Brotherton,

who had grown up on a 700 acre farm on what was now the battlefield. Apparently couriers were dispatched to locate the soldier, and he joined Longstreet's group sometime during the night.<sup>6</sup> In view of the late hour, and no doubt tired from their long journey, Longstreet and his staff bedded down at Bragg's headquarters. It was a cold night and frost formed on the grass as the exhausted men tried to get a few hours of sleep.

If Longstreet had a hard time getting to sleep, it might have been because he was thinking about his situation and the many events that had so recently taken place. Only ten days earlier, as he departed from Lee's headquarters, he had said that he wanted time to gain the confidence of his new command before leading them into battle. He also wanted the opportunity to aggressively follow up any successes which might be gained. He would have neither. Instead, he had just been put in charge of 23,000 infantrymen, organized into six divisions of 17 brigades. He also commanded two divisions of cavalry that were guarding his left flank, and some artillery. He had not yet seen the battlefield, the troops, or any of his subordinate commanders.

Additionally, most of his own two divisions had just completed a rail movement almost a thousand miles in length. Three of his brigades had already been in

the fight, and two more were marching from Catoosa Station that very night to join him. The arrival time of the other four brigades and his artillery battalion was unknown, but it was doubtful they would be there in time for tomorrow's fight. Certainly conditions for the new commander of the left wing were less than ideal, with a major attack scheduled to take place in about six hours.

But things had also happened quickly to that portion of his command that had preceded him. When his officers and men began off-loading at Catoosa Station on the 18th, the Confederate army was already in contact, and troops were needed at the front, some 12 miles away, as soon as possible. Longstreet's lead brigade, Robertson's Texans, became part of a provisional division under the command of Brig. Gen. Bushrod Johnson and marched toward the front line. Johnson had been ordered by Bragg to attack the enemy, cross Chickamauga Creek near Reed's Bridge, and then swing south toward Lee and Gordon's Mills. Law's Brigade of Alabamans, which had not been able to cook any rations, was ordered to do so and follow Johnson as soon as possible. Longstreet's other brigade, Benning's Georgians, was directed to guard the rapidly expanding depot at Ringgold.<sup>7</sup>

"When we left the train," one member of Robertson's Texas Brigade remembered, "we were marched a few miles and thrown in line of battle and forward no great distance until we were near the enemy." There was plenty of confusion and according to the colonel of the 15th Alabama, that unit "got on the wrong road and marched I don't know where to and camped; got up the next morning and marched back again." Another also wrote of the confusion and hasty off-loading, adding "we were hurried from the trains into line of battle."<sup>8</sup> After several hours of skirmishing, the Confederates forced Union cavalry and mounted infantry back and began crossing at Reed's Bridge and at a nearby ford sometime after 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Earlier that same afternoon, Maj. Gen. Hood had arrived at Ringgold. Unlike Longstreet, Hood found orders from Bragg waiting for him. As Hood wrote, he was to proceed to Reed's Bridge, "and assume command of the column then advancing on the Federals. I had my horse to leap from the train, mounted with one arm in a sling, and, about 3 p.m., joined our forces." As Hood reached the front and rode past his troops, the first time most of them had seen him since his wounding, he received what he called "a touching welcome." A member of the brigade provided details: "It was with difficulty that a shout of welcome was repressed lest

it give notice to the enemy that Confederate infantry was at hand. But every hat was lifted in acknowledgment of Hood's presence as he passed through the line to take his place in its rear."<sup>9</sup>

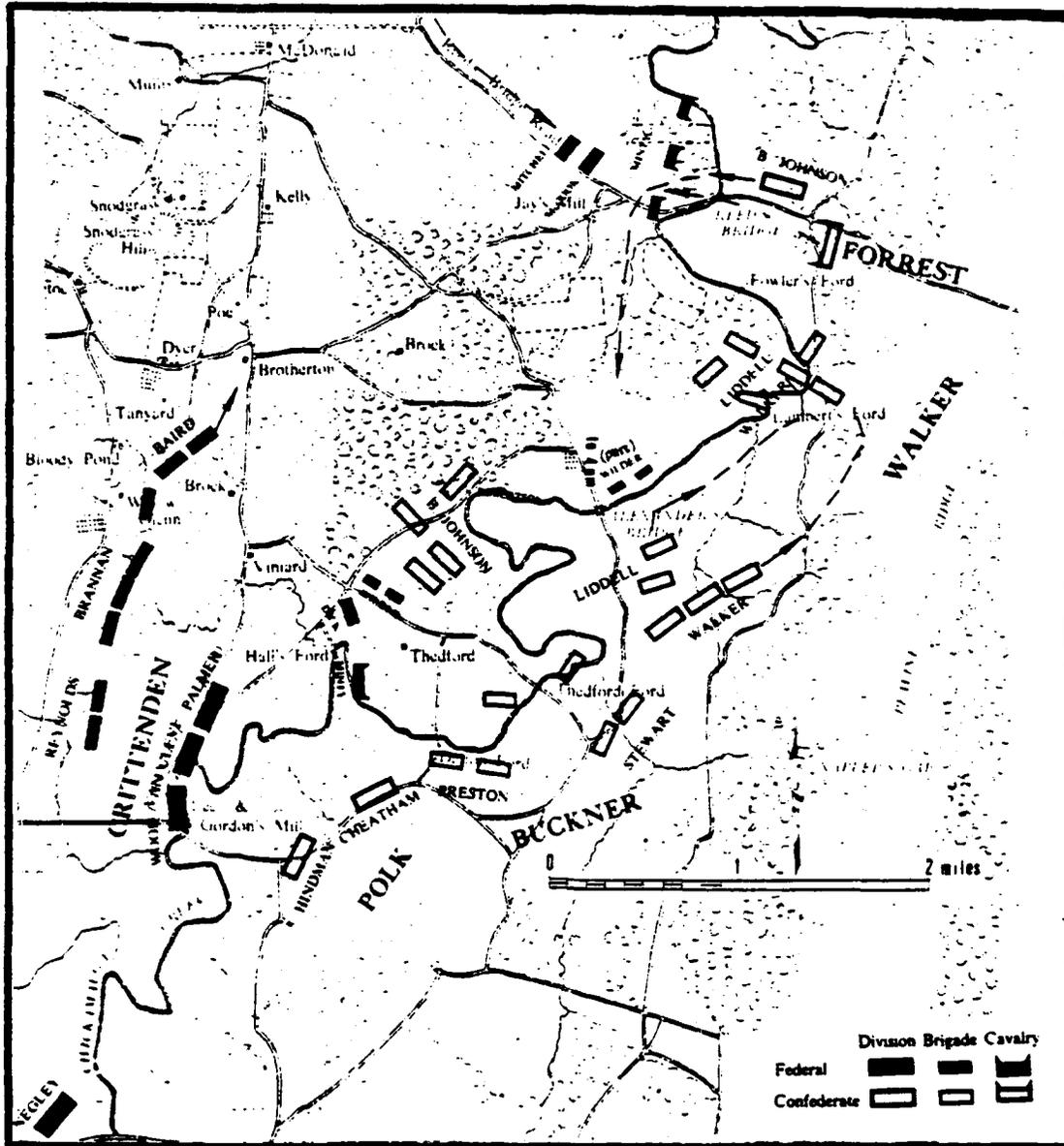


Figure 6

Battlefield Map: Sep 18

During the remainder of the 18th, Hood's command had continued to push across and move southward on the west side of the creek. By nightfall they stopped in line of battle about 800 yards from the Vineyard's house. Isolated from most of the rest of their army, it was a dangerous position until more brigades crossed the river later that night. According to Brig. Gen. Johnson, "The whole Yankee army was in our front (mainly at Lee and Gordon's Mills), on our right flank and rear." Throughout the night one-third of Johnson's and Hood's troops were kept awake at all times, while the remainder slept in place with their weapons.<sup>10</sup>

With the preliminary maneuvering accomplished, the battle renewed in earnest on the morning of the 19th. The Union and Confederate armies now faced each other along a five-mile front along the west side of the Chickamauga Creek. Benning's Brigade came forward from its defensive positions at Ringgold, and all three of Hood's brigades were reunited in a reshuffling of units. The command structure was quickly sorted out. Hood was now in charge of a corps, composed of elements of three different divisions. Law, whose brigade had finished preparing rations and marched to the forward positions, temporarily assumed command of Hood's division. Sheffield, a senior regimental commander, assumed command of Law's Brigade.

A series of uncoordinated attacks, marked by heavy fighting in the wooded terrain, continued throughout the 19th. Command and control was primarily decentralized to division level, and even then it was almost impossible to maintain. Describing the constant gun fire and thick smoke that covered the field, one soldier wrote:

that at times a man could not recognize his file leader. The underbrush and muscadine vines were so thick and interwoven that it was almost impossible to get through, and of course our lines were broken and irregular. Those who were not so badly embarrassed by brush and vines naturally got ahead, causing companies and even regiments to lap over each other, which created any amount of confusion.<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the heavy casualties, neither side gained an advantage on the 19th.

That night was extremely cold and fires were not allowed on the front lines. According to a soldier in the 4th Texas, "we all lay down in line of battle. We could hear the Federals cutting down trees and building breastworks, and we knew that we would have to get up next morning and take those breastworks, regardless of cost, and with that vast army in front of us, and they behind the breastworks, we knew that it was a serious matter." Another soldier with the same thoughts wrote,



Early that same evening, prior to Longstreet's arrival, Hood, as was the practice in Lee's army, had reported to Bragg's headquarters. Struck by the lack of confidence and cheerfulness which he found, he received instructions to attack in the morning after the troops on his right launched their attack. Hood, returning to the vicinity of his troops, spent the rest of the night at Gen. Buckner's camp because as he explained, "I had nothing with me save that which I had brought from the train upon my horse."<sup>13</sup>

"The sun, on the morning of the 20th, rose in unusual splendor," according to a South Carolinian on the field, "and cast its rays and shadows in sparkling brilliancy over the mountains and plains of North Georgia. The leaves of the trees and shrubbery, in their golden garb of yellow, shown out bright and beautiful in their early autumnal dress -- quite in contrast with the bloody scenes to be enacted before the close of the day."<sup>14</sup>

By dawn Longstreet and his staff were riding to the front in search of his new command. The detailed information on the terrain and road networks from Tom Brotherton was invaluable. He found the front line to be about 300 yards east of the Lafayette-Chattanooga dirt road. The alignment of divisions, each of which had three brigades, was as follows: Preston's division

on the far left, then Hindman and Johnson, with Stewart on the far right. Hood's division was aligned behind Johnson. The divisions were ordered to form with two brigades in the front line and the third brigade in the rear for support. Longstreet's other division, under McLaws, only had two brigades in the fight. It arrived from Catoosa Station later in the morning, and formed a third line behind, and in support of, Hood's division. Hood's division was designated as the main column of attack.<sup>15</sup> It was an interesting attack formation, especially coming only two months after Gettysburg. There, on July 3, Longstreet had been involved in "Pickett's Charge." The formation at Chickamauga was much more compact and powerful. How much of the formation's design was intentional and how much was the result of the terrain and limited time to shift troops, is unknown.

Appropriately enough, Hood was one of the first commanders that Longstreet located that morning. Hood later described the meeting:

He inquired concerning the formation of my lines, the spirit of our troops, and the effect produced upon the enemy by our assault. I informed him that the feeling of officers and men was never better, that we had driven the enemy fully one mile the day before, and that we would rout him before sunset. This distinguished general instantly responded with that confidence

which had so often contributed to his extraordinary success, that we would of course whip and drive him from the field. I could but exclaim that I was rejoiced to hear him so express himself, as he was the first general I had met since my arrival who talked of victory.<sup>16</sup>

With his small staff sent out on various tasks, Longstreet moved on to the north and located Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart, commander of the right division of the left wing. The two West Point classmates had roomed together for a short period during their schooling. But they quickly got down to business, as Longstreet told Stewart that he would be getting orders directly from the new wing commander. They reviewed Bragg's basic battle plan, and Longstreet told him to launch the attack after the division on either his right or left moved out. Stewart explained that he had no contact with elements of the right wing, and that it was at least one-half mile to their nearest unit. Longstreet instructed the division commander to move some of his troops to the right. This was done and the extreme right brigade extended its line obliquely to the right and rear, to prevent being caught in the flank by a possible Union assault.<sup>17</sup>

By this time it was well past daylight and more than 100,000 soldiers faced each other, waiting for the fight to be renewed. Longstreet continued to make

minor changes to his formation, as there were no sounds of an attack from the right. He considered trying to realign the divisions of Stewart and Preston. They were both part of the Buckner's Corps, yet they were at opposite ends of the left wing, making command and control difficult for the corps commander. However, expecting the attack momentarily, Longstreet decided against the change. Preston's division was designated as the reserve of the left wing.

Meanwhile, communications problems in the Confederate right wing had caused a delay. The late night reorganization had led to problems, and in the darkness, attack orders had failed to reach all of the appropriate commanders. Post-campaign bitterness and accusations cloud the circumstances, but at the time designated for the attack, units were not in position. Many of the troops were drawing rations and eating breakfast. Bragg, naturally upset with the confusion and delay, rode forward to the right wing commander's headquarters. The attack finally got underway somewhere between 9:30 and 10:00. However, as units moved out from right to left they were fed piecemeal into the fight. In spite of heavy fighting, and some initial success, Federal reinforcements from other parts of the line stopped the assault.



Shortly before 11 o'clock, it was obvious to Longstreet that Bragg's plan for a wheel to the left was not working as anticipated. His last units, under McLaws, had arrived after their night march from Catoosa Station, and they were being put into the line. He sent a note to Bragg, saying he thought he could break the enemy line, but before receiving a reply, he saw his right division under Stewart moving forward in the attack. Bragg, impatient at finding his plans falling apart, had sent a staff member down the line ordering all division commanders to move forward immediately. Contrary to normal military procedure, he had not informed the rest of the chain of command.

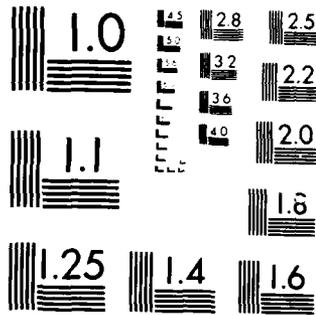
Although it was too late to stop Stewart, Longstreet was able to hold up Johnson and Hood. That gave him time to finish getting McLaws in place, and have Hindman's division dress on Johnson. Within a few minutes final preparations were complete. Longstreet had 23,000 soldiers ready to attack, with more than 11,000 of them massed in a column of three lines on a half mile front. Because the Confederate formation was hidden in the woods, the Federals, only a quarter of a mile away, were unaware of what was about to hit them.

To make matters even worse for the Union army, they were at that very moment suffering from a communications problem of their own. A staff officer,

riding down the Union line, thought he noticed a gap between two divisions. While a unit was actually there, the staff officer had not seen it because of the woods. When he reported the gap to Rosecrans, the Union commander had a vaguely written order immediately sent to one division to close up on the other as fast as possible, and support it. That division, under the command of Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood, was immediately pulled back from the front line and shifted to the left, creating an actual gap rather than closing one. Worse yet, the gap was directly across from the massed column of Confederates that Longstreet was, at that moment, sending forward.

The Confederate left wing stormed out of the woods about 11:15. Within 10 minutes, Bushrod Johnson's lead brigades were across the LaFayette Road, passed the Brotherton farmhouse, through an open field and into some woods on the other side. They crossed some earthworks where a Union brigade had been and moved into a second clearing, stopping to catch their breath and reform. Capturing prisoners and artillery pieces, they had penetrated one-half mile into the Federal line. By noon, they were one mile into the Union center and had captured 19 cannons and destroyed a whole Federal brigade. Johnson described the scene in his after action report:





MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

The scene now presented was unspeakably grand. The resolute and impetuous charge, the rush of our heavy columns sweeping out from the shadow and gloom of the forest into the open fields flooded with sunlight, the glitter of arms, the onward dash of artillery and mounted men, the retreat of the foe, the shouts of the hosts of our army, the dust, the smoke, the noise of fire-arms--of whistling balls and grape-shot and of bursting shell--made up a battle scene of unsurpassed grandeur.<sup>18</sup>

To Johnson's left, Hindman's division was also having great success. While they had met more opposition and had not penetrated as far as Johnson, they had inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. At one point, one of Hindman's brigades was hit in the flank and pushed back, but Longstreet sent a brigade from Preston's reserve division forward and restored the line.

To the right, Stewart's division, which had moved out under Bragg's orders, had run into trouble. Although they had crossed the LaFayette Road, they were being forced back when the rest of Longstreet's line attacked. But Law and Kershaw had angled to the right of Johnson's division, and relieved some of the pressure. Taking heavy fire from their right, Law faced them in that direction and moved forward, gaining ground until stopped by a Union counterattack.

Fierce fighting was taking place in the woods all along the line. It was not the typical stand-up, shoulder-to-shoulder formations used in most Civil War battles. Instead, in these dense woods most fighting was done by small groups of soldiers, as smoke and trees limited vision. The only thing penetrating the noise of rifles and artillery was the distinctive Rebel yell. "It was only now and then," one soldier said, "that a clearing gave the combatants access to uninterrupted sunlight....It was difficult for an officer on horseback to get an extended view in any direction, and to footmen it was simply impossible."<sup>19</sup>

When small groups of men on either side could be controlled by an officer, skirmish drill tactics were often used. A soldier in Robertson's Brigade remembered, "When the officer in command of a skirmish line gives the order 'take obstacle' he simply means for every man to seek shelter wherever he can find it." At this point in the battle, the Texan continued, "Every tree, sapling and stump was occupied that was big enough to afford any protection." Union soldiers also took advantage of cover and concealment. A Confederate, after receiving a volley of fire, wrote, "For almost a minute we failed to locate their line. Then we discovered they were lying down, and shooting

from behind trees, fallen logs and other cover, and we commenced firing as we advanced rapidly toward them.\*20

Sometime after noon, Longstreet decided to change Bragg's plan of swinging to the left. He knew that he had penetrated the Union lines and that most of the Union right had broken and was running to the rear.

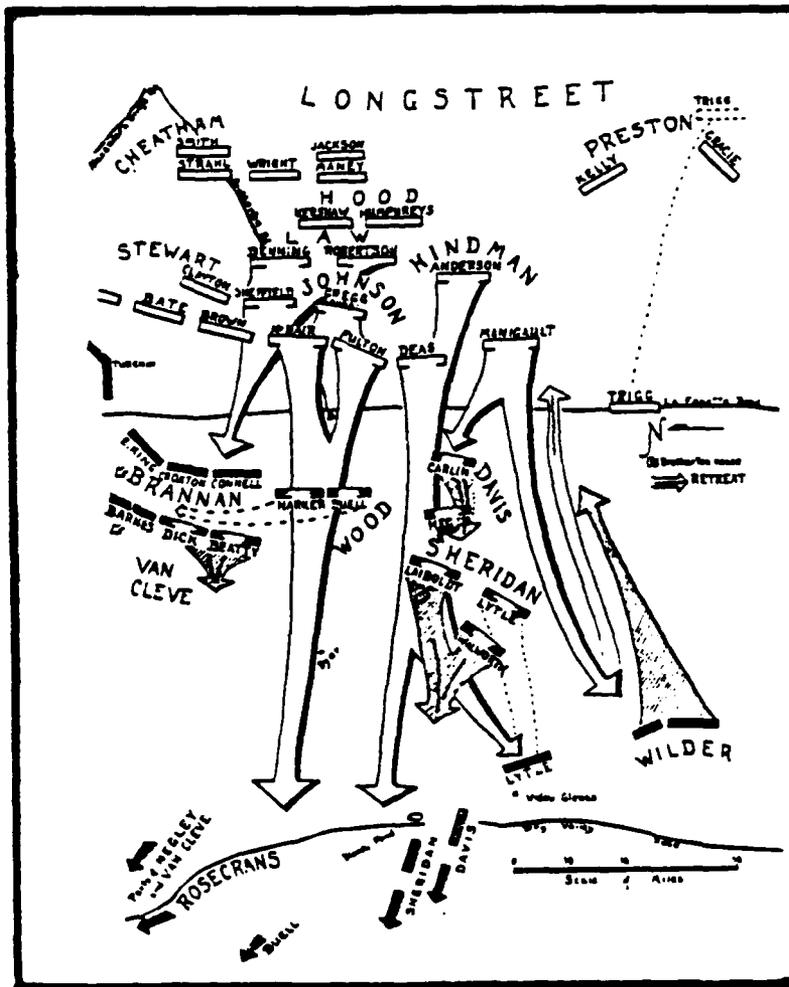


Figure 9  
Left Wing Assault

Longstreet also knew that the Confederate right was still holding the Union left in place. He decided to reverse Bragg's plan and turn his troops to the right. This would force the broken Union right into their left, and place them all in a vise, caught between the Confederate right and left wings. Law and Kershaw had already faced in that direction, and couriers were dispatched to have Johnson, Hindman and Preston form on the left of Law and Kershaw. Realizing that it would take some time to make these changes, Longstreet also knew there were still six hours of daylight left. In addition, the maneuver would allow his commanders to regain control of their formations, resupply ammunition and catch their breath.

The new obstacle to Longstreet's front was a series of hills, best known as Snodgrass Hill. Union Gen. George Thomas had rallied portions of the Union line and was stubbornly holding on. His successful delaying action would buy critical time for the retreating Union forces and earn Thomas the nickname, "The Rock of Chickamauga."

Maj. Gen. Hood, since the beginning of the left wing's assault, had been riding up and down the battle line, moving troops and filling gaps. Shortly before 1 o'clock, he saw Robertson's Texans caught in the flank and near by a Union counterattack, causing momentary

confusion. The situation was magnified by the fact that moments earlier, according to one of the participants, these same troops "had advanced so far in front of Gen. Braggs lines, that with our new uniforms, looking blue, we drew the fire of our own men in our rear, and caused some confusion." As Kershaw and Hindman advanced to restore the lines, Hood rode in that direction and was suddenly shot out of his saddle by a bullet in the upper right leg. Carried to a nearby field hospital, Hood's leg was amputated, and his active role at Chickamauga ended. For his "distinguished conduct and ability in the battle of the 20th inst.", Longstreet would recommend him for promotion to lieutenant general.<sup>21</sup>

About this same time, Longstreet directed that lunch for his staff be set up, while he rode forward with Buckner to inspect the ground to his front. He later wrote, "I could see but little of the enemy's line, and only knew of it by the occasional exchange of fire....I rode forward to be accurately assured, when I suddenly found myself under near fire of his sharpshooters....I saw enough, however, to mark the ground line of his field-works as they were spread along the front of the right wing." With no chief of artillery present, Longstreet directed Buckner to move his artillery forward to engage the new Union line

forming on Snodgrass Hill. He then returned to his headquarters position for lunch.<sup>22</sup>

Fighting was still going on up and down the front as Longstreet and his staff sat down to a lunch of bacon and Georgia sweet potatoes. The potatoes were greatly appreciated as an unaccustomed luxury for the officers from Virginia. Suddenly an artillery shell exploded just behind the group, and Lt. Col. Manning, Chief of Ordnance, was struck by a fragment. He fell to the ground, gasping for breath. As the other staff officers reached him he was writhing in pain and unable to breath. Longstreet suggested checking his throat, where they found that Manning had lodged a piece of potato in his windpipe when the shell fragment grazed his head. It was removed and Manning quickly recovered and was moved to the rear.<sup>23</sup>

As everyone returned to their meal, a courier from Gen. Bragg approached and informed Longstreet that the army commander wanted him to come to a meeting place a short distance to the rear. Longstreet rode to meet Bragg and updated him on the status to his front. To reinforce his success, he suggested to his commander that troops from the right wing might be shifted around to the left to further strengthen his attack. But Bragg did not seem to appreciate the opportunity for victory that was in front of him. He was most

certainly upset over the early morning delays that had caused his own battle plans to go awry. According to Longstreet, the army commander refused to shift the troops, adding the remark "there is not a man in the right wing who has any fight in him." With little other comment, Bragg then returned to his headquarters near Reed's Bridge where he apparently remained for the rest of the day. Longstreet returned to his own headquarters position.<sup>24</sup>

As Longstreet rejoined his staff, the firing to his front was increasing. Kershaw had moved forward in the attack, just as the other commanders were moving into their new positions. Longstreet sent word to Kershaw and Humphreys to keep up the pressure, and that Law would come in on their left and Stewart on their right. In the meantime, Kershaw had overcome a command and control problem that resulted from the rail movement. As Kershaw wrote, "In the absence of horses for myself and staff, I detailed one man from each regiment as orderlies to communicate with the command." The system worked, although two couriers were killed performing this duty.<sup>25</sup>

Because Bragg had refused to provide additional support, Longstreet decided to continue holding most of Preston's division in reserve. Heavy fighting continued throughout the afternoon in the confusion of

the dense woods. Union reinforcements arrived to stop one assault, which quickly reformed and attacked again. Just before 4 o'clock Longstreet committed his reserves and Preston's division moved forward and joined the assaults.

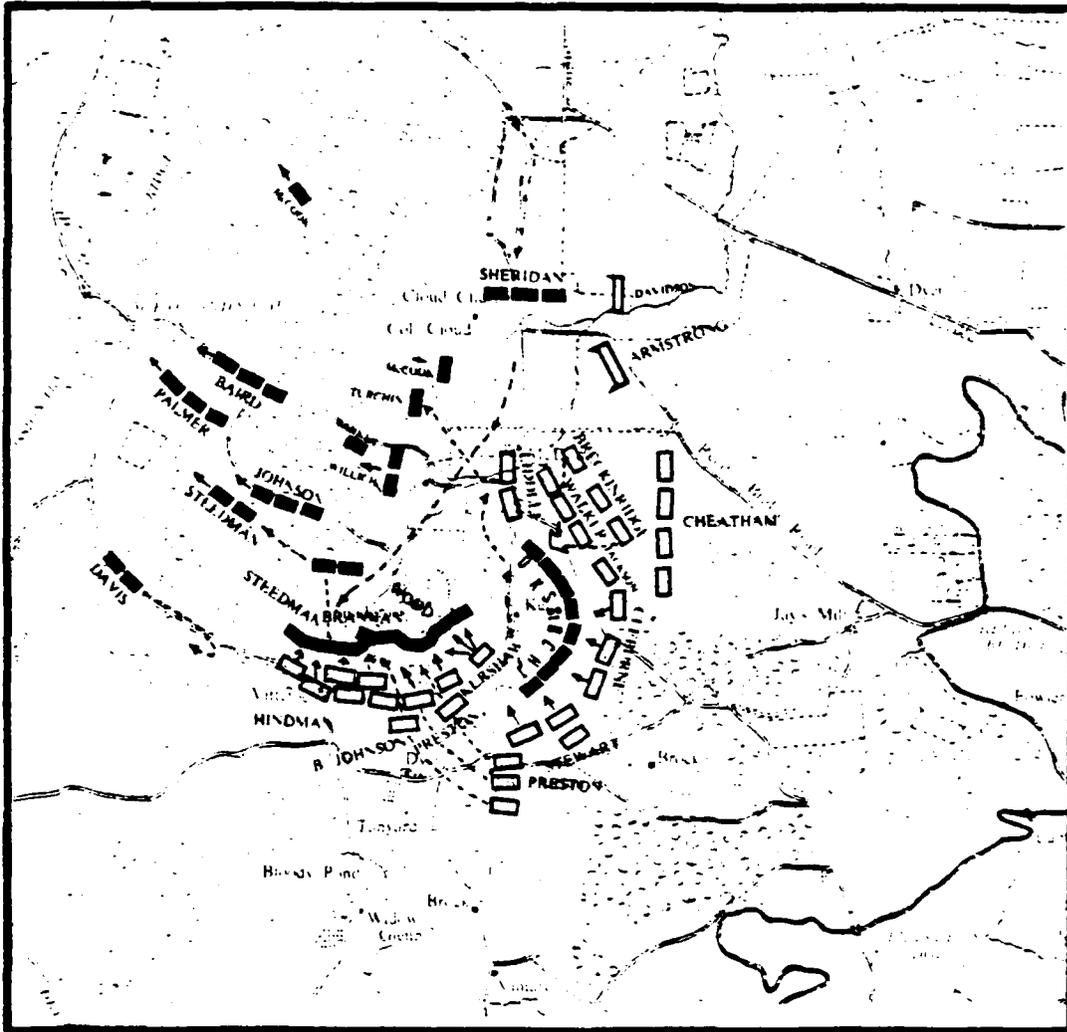


Figure 10  
Battlefield Map:  
P.M. Sep 20

By this time firing could be heard from the direction of the right wing. Polk's units were moving again, putting additional pressure on the Union forces. Fighting was still heavy all along the front of the left wing as repeated assaults continued against the Federal positions on Snodgrass Hill. At 5 o'clock Longstreet sent a staff officer to Stewart, directing him to "move forward upon the enemy."<sup>26</sup> The assaults continued, and as the sun was setting, Union forces began to withdraw from the hill and move towards Chattanooga. Elements from both Confederate wings closed on the position, and, according to Longstreet, "burst their throats in loud huzzas." Several general officers gathered to congratulate each other, and, as Longstreet wrote, "The Army of Tennessee knew how to enjoy its first grand victory."<sup>27</sup>

Thomas' delaying action had inflicted heavy casualties on the Confederates and purchased the time needed to allow the Union forces to avoid a total rout. Under the cover of darkness they completed their withdrawal from the field.

Throughout the night, stragglers were rounded up and burial details began their work. Often-empty haversacks were filled with goods left abandoned by the enemy. Ammunition was resupplied and preparations made to renew the offensive in the morning. The Battle of

Chickamauga was ended. During the action of the 20th the left wing alone had captured more than 40 pieces of artillery, some wagons, more than 3000 prisoners and 10 regimental colors. Additionally, 17,645 small arms and almost 400,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition were picked up from the field.<sup>28</sup>

Longstreet's casualties had been high. According to one source, "The average loss for Longstreet's command in the two hours of the general assault on Thomas' final position was 44 percent of the number present when the final assault was started." The left wing commander's official after action report, with one brigade's report missing, reflected 1089 killed, 6506 wounded, and 272 missing. Total casualties for both sides at Chickamauga exceeded 35,000. The average loss rate in the Confederate infantry, which had been on the offense, was 40 percent of the numbers engaged, while some regiments on both sides lost more than 50 percent.<sup>29</sup>

Chickamauga had renewed its literal translation of the "River of Death." A soldier who had a close call when his bayonet, which was in the scabbard, was struck by a bullet, wrote his family, "through His mercy I am preserved through the perils of another great battle, far more dangerous in its individual and personal incidents to our brigade than any of the war."<sup>30</sup>

The battle had been a soldier's fight, with much of the action occurring at individual and small unit level. "In timber as thick as that in which the battle raged that afternoon," a participant wrote, "it was impossible for one in the ranks to see what was happening to right or left. To do his share of the work on hand, he could only look straight before him, and tackle the foe immediately facing him." And both sides did their share with the fiercest of fighting. A Texan wrote, "Deducting the intervals necessary for reforming and relieving exhausted troops (and these intervals were very short), there must have been eight hours of unintermitted musketry on each day. It reminded me of rain on a tin roof, where at intervals the storm rages with tremendous fury, then lulls but still continues as sounds grow faint or distinct according to the changes of the varying wind."<sup>31</sup>

The severity of the fighting was obvious to one of the participants, when, on the day after the battle he walked across part of the field to locate a tree he had used for cover. His first reaction was that "it looked much larger than it did" the day before. He went on to write:

I counted the bullet holes in the tree and some of them were ten feet from the ground, while a number of limbs had been shot from the tree

higher up. I will not give the number of bullet holes I counted in that old tree, for I am telling the truth as I remember it, and I am not going to give anyone a reasonable excuse to say I am lying about it.<sup>32</sup>

As late as 1890 local sawmills still refused to take timber from the battlefield because the large numbers of bullets and shell fragments damaged their saws.<sup>33</sup>

Only half of Longstreet's troops arrived in time to participate in the "Gettysburg of the West". But those that did were the pride of Lee's army. Their courage, combined with the tactical skills and professional leadership of the officers that led them, made a significant contribution to the tactical victory at Chickamauga.

CHAPER 4

END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jones, Vol. 2, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Sorrel, p. 188; Drane to Sims, September 15, 1863; Bowen to Sims, September 16, 1863, MS telegraph receipts in Valentine Museum, Richmond.

<sup>3</sup>Dickert, p. 267.

<sup>4</sup>Longstreet, pp. 437-438. It is not known which unit the picket belonged to, or even whether or not it was actually a Union position. One guess is that it may have been a patrol from Minty's or Dan McCook's cavalry patrols. Tucker, p. 213. Sorrel's account is similiar to Longstreets, except that he adds that the surprised picket hastily fired at the staff as it quickly moved away. Sorrel, p. 189.

<sup>5</sup>Sorrel, pp. 188-189; Longstreet, p. 439.

<sup>6</sup>Tucker, p. 262.

<sup>7</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 451.

<sup>8</sup>William A. Fletcher, Rebel Private Front and Rear (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1954) p. 73; Oates, p. 254; Todd, pp. 17-18.

<sup>9</sup>Hood, p. 61. The account from Hood's book, over when he assumed command, differs from Johnson's after action report. See O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 452; Polley, p. 199.

<sup>10</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 453.

<sup>11</sup>Giles, p. 201.

<sup>12</sup>Polk, p. 28.; West, p. 112.

<sup>13</sup>Hood, p. 62.

<sup>14</sup>Dickert, p. 267.

<sup>15</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 288.

<sup>16</sup>Hood, p. 63.

<sup>17</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 363.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 457-458.

<sup>19</sup>Polley, p. 205.

<sup>20</sup>Giles, p. 202; Polley, p. 209.

<sup>21</sup>Todd, p. 18; Hood, pp. 63-65. Hood gives the time of his wounding as 2:30 p.m., but that seems to be much too late. The time is more likely to have been about one and one-half hours after the attack kicked off, placing it just short of 1 o'clock.

<sup>22</sup>Longstreet, pp. 450-451.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 451.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 452.

<sup>25</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 506.

<sup>26</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 364.

<sup>27</sup>Longstreet, p. 456.

<sup>28</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 290.

<sup>CC</sup>Ibid., pp. 290-291.

<sup>29</sup>Donald Sanger and Thomas Hay, James Longstreet: I Soldier, II Politician, Officeholder and Writer (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1952), p. 211.

<sup>30</sup>West, p. 106.

<sup>31</sup>Polley, p. 210; West, pp. 113-114.

<sup>32</sup>Giles, pp. 205-206.

<sup>33</sup>Tucker, p. 175.

## CHAPTER 5

Soldiers in pictures who stand up  
in unbroken lines and fire by  
platoons don't represent the  
soldiers who fought the Battle of  
Chickamauga.<sup>1</sup>

For a brief moment the life flame of the Confederacy grew bright as the telegraph wires carried the news of a great victory at Chickamauga. The movement of Longstreet's Corps, a tremendous strategic and logistical accomplishment by itself, significantly contributed to that success. But the defeated Union forces, due to Thomas' stand on Snodgrass Hill and the total absence of an aggressive pursuit by the Confederates, withdrew to safety in Chattanooga. The strategic initiatives gained by the rail movement were lost through incomplete tactical execution. Thus, in spite of the valor and high price paid in Confederate casualties, Chickamauga became an empty victory in terms of affecting the overall war effort. But that does not tarnish or reduce the importance of the movement and the role of Longstreet's troops. The planning and execution of that operation provides a little known yet fascinating piece of American history.

The short-notice, inter-theater movement of troops in response to a military or political situation remains a critical mission for today's Army. And, in spite of the countless hours of planning and intensive training, it is a complicated and difficult task. Interestingly enough, many of the problems faced by the planners of Longstreet's move still exist today. Technology has changed, but the basics have not. Transportation assets must still be mobilized and put in the right place, at the right time, to move large numbers of personnel and equipment. Timely, high-level decisions, loading plans, movement tables, a command, control and communications network, operations security and resupply are still critical. All of these factors had to be overcome in September 1863 under less than ideal conditions. An analysis of their successes and failures is not only an interesting part of history, it reveals lessons learned that still apply to modern contingency missions.

The idea of concentrating troops in the West by the use of a rail movement was not new in September 1863. On an individual basis, several high-ranking officers and government officials had discussed the idea for well over a year. Yet the Confederate Government, without an organized planning section working on contingencies at the strategic level, was

slow to accept the operation. Even after the idea did come under serious consideration by the Confederate high command, the decision process took almost two weeks before approval was given. Of all the variables involved in Longstreet's movement, getting the final approval from the President had the biggest impact. In this case, that decision simply took too long. While the Richmond officials pondered over the decision, Union forces captured Knoxville and changed the entire situation by forcing the move over a much longer route. History is full of what if's, but one must wonder what would have happened if the decision had been made in a timely manner and Longstreet and his two full divisions had been with Bragg as early as September 10. Thus, some of the responsibility for the empty victory at Chickamauga certainly rests with the decision making process in Richmond.

Once the decision was made however, the planning process was quickly implemented. Transport capability was an immediate problem because the South did not possess an efficient transportation system capable of moving large amounts of troops and supplies over long distances in a short period of time. The rail network had always been a loose collection of short, non-standard, often unconnecting lines that were privately owned and operated. By September 1863, two

years of war had taken a heavy toll as worn-out equipment, lack of replacement track and engine parts, and the shortage of trained mechanics complicated the system. A joint committee report had warned the Georgia General Assembly only five months before the movement that, "The supply of the rolling stock and machinery of our several Rail Roads, and the condition of their roadbeds is such that, unless measures are taken to meet their necessities, the days of transportation by rail in the Confederacy are numbered."<sup>2</sup>

Since the railroads were commercially owned, and the government had little real authority over them, mutual cooperation was critical.<sup>3</sup> This relationship worked relatively well, although at least one company, after being approached by the government to cooperate in the operation, raised its rates due to the heavy demands for moving the troops west. Yet these problems were overcome by the hard work, organization, and determination of the planners. In general, the mobilization of the transport capability was adequate to handle the deployment. However, the limited rail assets and its poor operational condition severely constrained the planners. Many common items of military equipment, especially those requiring horses for mobility, were left behind in Virginia.

Additionally, numerous breakdowns and delays actually prevented some troops from reaching the field in time to fight at Chickamauga.

Centralized management of the rail movement was maintained in Richmond, while specific details and the overall execution were delegated to rail agents along the route. Requests for additional rail assets were forwarded to Maj. Sims' office for consolidation and action, taking advantage of his greater resources. At the same time, in one telegram to the agent in Goldsboro, North Carolina, Maj. Sims only suggested dividing a route and then added, "I leave it all to you."<sup>4</sup> In spite of the myriad of problems, the command and control system appears to have remained intact during the movement. When problems were encountered, they were generally due to overwhelming equipment problems rather than poor planning or control.

Logisticians were called into the planning at an early stage. In fact, the Quartermaster-General and the Chief of the Railroad Bureau were heavily involved in the entire decision process. Responsibility for the movement planning was subdivided. Gen. Lee worked out the phased movement from the front line positions to the city of Richmond. Longstreet and Lee worked together in selecting the specific troops to be moved, and coordinated those details with Richmond. Maj.

Sims, working closely with the Quartermaster-General, Brig. Gen. Lawton, coordinated the efforts of the rail agents along the route; first, along the proposed line through Knoxville, and later on the routes through the Carolinas and Georgia. As finally implemented, Sims' area of responsibility extended from Richmond to Atlanta. Col. Jones, of Bragg's staff, was responsible for the final movement from Atlanta to the vicinity of Ringgold and Catoosa Station.

Meetings were held in Richmond between the principal parties to ensure that plans progressed. The telegraph system, already in place, was the primary communications link between the control facility in Richmond and the rail agents. A reporting system was initiated to provide status and troop passing data to facilitate centralized control.

As with most operations of this nature, the ability to resupply and sustain it are critical. In this case, the major logistical problem faced by the planners was the limited support base that could be transported by rail. Not only was the amount of basic supplies restricted, the transportation assets and horses necessary for drawing and moving items at the other end would be practically non-existent. The number of horses required for Alexander's artillery battalion of 26 guns would have been just short of 500.

Clearly the additional strain on the transportation system, as well as the wear and tear on the horses, influenced the decision to leave the horses behind.

There was no apparent attempt to task organize the troops during loading. Unit integrity was maintained, with priority given to the infantry, and all artillery units bringing up the rear. Units traveled as light as possible, with most enlisted men taking only what they could carry. According to a member of Kershaw's Brigade, "the soldiers carried all they possessed on their backs, with four days of cooked rations all the time. Generally one or two pieces of light utensils were carried by each company."<sup>5</sup> While a few telegraphic passing reports mention loads of baggage, those cars were usually with the officers' horses. Some excess wagons and horses were drawn from Bragg's army, and President Davis mentioned drawing additional horses and artillery in Augusta and Atlanta in several messages. Perhaps Hood himself best described the logistics base when he said of his men, "They were destitute of almost everything, I might say, except pride, spirit, and forty rounds of ammunition to the man."<sup>6</sup>

A plan for issuing rations while enroute, for both men and a few horses, also had to be worked out. Apparently some rations were issued in Richmond, with

additional supplies issued as the trains passed through major cities. One soldier wrote of "munching hard-tack and nibbling rancid bacon issued to us at Atlanta."<sup>7</sup> Fortunately, whether by accident or design, civilians also provided much food, evidently of much better quality, all along the route.

One of the difficulties with issuing rations, especially several meals at a time, was identified by a colonel from the 15th Alabama. It is as true today as it was then. "It mattered not whether his rations were for one, two, or three days, he ate them all at once just the same, not because he was hungry; but, as he said, his rations were easier to carry that way than in his haversack." The colonel went on to give a more valid reason, adding, "A soldier in active service will eat every time he can get it, for he never knows when he is going to be put on short rations."<sup>8</sup>

Arrangements for drawing ammunition would also have had a high priority. Since little was taken on the train, most would have to come from Bragg's army or be obtained in Atlanta as the units passed through. The papers of Lt. Col. Hypolite Oladowski, Bragg's chief ordnance officer, do not reflect any details of special issues to Longstreet's troops. Unit after action reports place a heavy emphasis on picking up ammunition and weapons from the field and Bushrod

Johnson mentions the capture of a Union ammunition train on the 20th, and relying on it as a source. Because weapons and equipment were basically the same for both sides, ammunition from numerous sources was interchangeable, and does not appear to have been a problem.

According to Longstreet there was some degree of organic logistical support established at "the railroad depot", where his acting chief of quartermaster's department and acting chief of subsistence department were in "the active discharge of the duties of their departments."<sup>9</sup>

Although the reinforcement operation did catch Union forces somewhat off guard, there was little real effort made to achieve surprise. Meetings in Richmond were described as "secret," yet rumors quickly floated through both the North and South. Gen. Lee pointed out his concerns and the problems of a suspected leak to northern newspapers. Although Washington was aware of the move, Rosecrans, the Union commander on the ground, was not immediately notified. In that respect, surprise was achieved.

There was no real attempt to hide the movement from the enemy. Civil War staffs did not include an organized intelligence cell, although the importance of knowing what the other side was doing was realized and

appreciated. The Federals gathered intelligence from a variety of sources, possibly including a spy who allegedly traveled part of the route with Longstreet. Even when Rosecrans personally interrogated prisoners from Longstreet's Corps, he initially refused to believe their unit was present on the field. In general, failure to accurately interpret the intelligence resulted in no real early warning or tactical advantage.<sup>10</sup>

The occupation of Knoxville and Cumberland Gap by Burnside's forces reduced the overall effectiveness of the operation. There is no evidence that Burnside was intentionally severing that rail line to prevent such a move. However, its capture forced the Confederates to use the longer and less efficient southern routes, resulting in only part of Longstreet's Corps arriving in time to fight.

In actuality, Burnside's movements presented problems to both sides during the entire operation. Lincoln and Halleck directed him to link up with Rosecrans, which he failed to do. This caused some anxious moments in Washington when officials finally realized that Longstreet was reinforcing Bragg. Davis and Lee had also assumed that the link up would be the logical course of action. After learning that Burnside had taken Knoxville instead, Lee wrote Davis, "Had I

been aware that Knoxville was the destination of General Burnside, I should have recommended that General Longstreet be sent to oppose him, instead of to Atlanta." 11

Overall, one of the strongest assets the Confederates had was their flexibility and ability to adjust to problems and changes in the situation. When Knoxville fell, Maj. Sims quickly pieced together a new route through the Carolinas and Georgia. With the exception of the one rail company raising rates, cooperation between the military and civilian companies was excellent. Trains broke down, countless delays occurred for a variety of reasons and schedules were often not met, yet the improvised system was flexible enough to absorb these difficulties and accomplish the mission. As one of Longstreet's staff officers summarized, "But we got there nevertheless."<sup>12</sup>

In spite of all the inherent problems in a movement of this size, the actual execution was relatively smooth. Certainly there were many problems encountered, and it is true that all of the troops did not arrive in time to participate at Chickamauga. However, considering the rapid sequence of events, execution of the movement was a truly outstanding achievement. The decision to undertake the reinforcement was made by the President on Sunday,

September 6, after almost two weeks of deliberation. The following day, Richmond planners learned that Knoxville had fallen and a completely new route, almost a thousand miles in length, had to be selected and organized. That same evening units in their positions on the Rapidan River began to receive their marching orders. Early the next morning, Tuesday the 8th, soldiers began marching to nearby rail heads for the short move to Richmond. By the evening of the 9th, only three days after the decision was made, 1700 Confederate soldiers had already departed the capital city. Troops began arriving in Atlanta late on Saturday, September 12, with the first unit detraining in the vicinity of Catoosa Station on the 14th. The last unit finally closed near Catoosa on about the 25th, although stragglers and one staff officer directed to bring up the rear did not arrive until the middle of October. This feat is even more spectacular in light of the limited size of Civil War staff sections and the absence of operations and planning cells to work on such contingency operations.

Once Longstreet's units entered the fight, interoperability with Bragg's army became a major factor, especially since some forces were committed immediately upon arrival. For the most part, differences between forces in the Eastern and Western Theaters were

relatively minor. The organization, equipment, command and control procedures, tactical doctrine and supply systems were similar. The absence of maps presented some problems, but not to the degree that might be expected. At least one unit moving from Catoosa Station took a wrong road, losing most of one day marching west and part of the next day retracing its route. Longstreet himself had a similar problem, riding for almost seven hours before locating Bragg's headquarters. But once the units reached the field, they were often guided by the sounds of battle, and the absence of maps does not seem to have caused many problems.

One minor difference that did surface was the degree of authority given to staff officers. In Lee's army, a staff officer could issue verbal orders to a unit commander in the name of the senior commander. However, in Bragg's army the practice was for verbal orders to come directly from the commander, with the staff only issuing written orders. At one point in the battle, a staff officer from Longstreet's Corps tried to issue verbal orders to Maj. Gen. Stewart, one of the division commanders of the left wing. Stewart would not accept the orders coming directly from a staff officer.

There are several recorded instances of battlefield rivalry and the relatively good natured exchange of barbs and comments between Longstreet's and Bragg's troops. According to one modern account of the battle:

The story was told that as Hood's men from the Army of Northern Virginia had gone into action they passed through some Tennessee troops resting behind the lines. 'Rise up, Tennesseans, and see the Virginians go in,' one of Hood's soldiers shouted.

When Hood suffered a reverse and came trailing back he passed the same body of troops. A man yelled: 'Rise up, Tennesseans, and see the Virginians come out.'<sup>13</sup>

Another example, recorded by a member of Robertson's Texans, incorporated not only a little friendly rivalry, but a perceived difference between East and West:

'You fellers'll catch h--ll in thar,' one of them shouted as he came near us; 'them fellers out thar you ar goin' up agin, ain't none of the blue-bellied, white-livered Yanks an' sassidge-eatin' forrin hirelin's you have in Virginny that'll run at the snap of a cap -- they are Western fellers, an' they'll mighty quick give you a bellyful o' fightin'.<sup>14</sup>

A member of Stewart's staff remembered one of Longstreet's units marching by "dressed in new clothes (something new to Bragg's army) and guying us with such

remarks as: 'Boys, the Army of Virginia will show you how to fight to-day.'" The differences in uniforms was also noted by one of Longstreet's troops who wrote, "The uniforms of the Eastern troops made quite a contrast with the tattered and torn home-made jeans of their Western brethren."<sup>15</sup>

There is a curious absence of comments concerning the effects of the long train movement and the rapid placement into the front lines from the soldiers themselves. Possibly the fatigue of the train ride was offset by the carnival-like atmosphere and excitement enjoyed during the trip. Things were different, however, after the battle. "The Texas Brigade devoted the 21st of September," according to a member, "to rest and recuperation. A thousand miles of rough travel, the long and rapid march of the 18th, and the two days of strain and hard fighting its men had undergone, had well-nigh exhausted their energies."<sup>16</sup>

Longstreet's actions on the afternoon of the 20th can also lead to speculation on the effects of the journey. His personal presence and influence at the front for a period of time were certainly not as great as they had been that morning. And, the numerous assaults against Snodgrass Hill, were not exactly in keeping with a general who favored maneuver over attacking at enemy strength. One possible explanation

could be that the effects of the train ride, the limited sleep on the night of the 19th and the activity of the morning of the 20th could have caught up with the 44 year old general. The combination of fatigue, warm weather and the lunch of bacon and sweet potatoes may have temporarily prevented Longstreet from a more personal involvement until later that afternoon.

Bragg's overall command problem may have been somewhat increased by Longstreet's arrival, placing three lieutenant generals in the command. For some reason, possibly his grudge against Hill, he reorganized the army into two wings instead of three, placing Hill under Polk. On the surface it seems strange to give the wing of an army to the general who had just arrived on the battlefield and did not know the terrain or most of the troops to be under his command. Under those conditions, an officer probably could have declined the command in favor of those who knew the ground. However, it is doubtful that the thought ever occurred to Longstreet.

Tactical command and control at Chickamauga suffered from much of the routine "fog of battle," but problems directly associated with interoperability do not seem to have been significant on the 19th and 20th. Terrain and vegetation greatly restricted vision and hampered normal control procedures. Robertson's

Brigade, probably because of its new blue uniforms, may have received friendly fire from its flank and rear, but this also occurred in other battles. Kershaw's staff overcame the shortage of horses by using foot couriers for communication.

For some reason, Longstreet did not attempt to keep his new commander informed during the battle. Bragg had to send him a message on the afternoon of the 20th requesting a meeting, but then Bragg withdrew himself from the battle by returning to his headquarters. Personalities, even more than being thrown together at the last minute, played a major role in shaping the senior command relationships.

Confederates from both East and West were schooled in Hardee's manual of tactics, providing a common base for doctrine and training. Formations and procedures were standardized in the school of the company, the regiment and the brigade. Since Federal officers and troops were trained from the same manuals, today's term "know your enemy" takes on special meaning. The fact that two major leaders who opposed each other, Rosecrans and Longstreet, were roommates at West Point was a fairly common Civil War occurrence.

Longstreet was an experienced fighter and tactician, whose presence contributed greatly to the outcome of the battle. His role in massing the column

formation for his assault may have been a direct lesson from the fields of Gettysburg. Overall, he handled command of his wing in an outstanding manner, but there are two areas in which he was not successful. Failure to employ his cavalry forces properly on the afternoon of the 20th reduced the amount of pressure that might have been applied to the routed Union forces. Additionally, failure to seize McFarland's Gap, which Longstreet's wing certainly could have taken, allowed a great many Federal troops to make good their escape to Chattanooga. This last area might have been the result, though, of poor maps and the fact that Longstreet was not totally familiar with that part of the ground.

In terms of numbers of troops, the reinforcement operation only placed about 7,000 additional soldiers into the line at Chickamauga. However, one fact that is sometimes overlooked, is that these were all hardened veterans, possibly the best troops of Lee's army. Their location in the line of battle involved them in some of the critical phases of the battle, as reflected by the casualty figures. The movement also provided immediately available fresh troops, as two full brigades joined Longstreet on the 21st. Had there been an aggressive pursuit, these additional units would have been an important advantage.

Possibly the most significant result of the movement lies in the leadership skills and tactical experience of the officer corps. Several brigades of infantry were certainly valuable, but the addition of a Longstreet, Hood, Kershaw and others provided a proven base of highly qualified and experienced line officers. Aggressive actions and the decisions made by Longstreet and his officers in determining the troop formations, directing the swing to the right instead of the left and the effective use of reserves, were instrumental in the victory.

Time and technology widely separate today's deployment contingencies from Longstreet's movement to northern Georgia. While rail transportation remains an important, though often neglected part of our mobilization transport system, inter-theater deployment is now done by air and sea. Trucks and tanks have replaced horses and wagons and tons of sophisticated support equipment have been added to the army's inventory. But are things today really that different?

The planners of Longstreet's movement did not develop a list of lessons learned based on their experience. If they had, it would have included some of the following:

- \* The decision to execute a major troop deployment must be made in a timely manner. Delays can

allow enemy activity to alter the situation.

- \* Adequate transport capability must exist and be maintained in a sufficient operational status. The more inefficient the system, whether through lack of maintenance or misuse, the greater the time involved in moving the troops. A combination of military and civilian equipment and management is feasible.
- \* Planning time is critical, as events happen rapidly and are subject to frequent changes. There should be an overall command and control element, with adequate communications, capable of augmenting major items of equipment and coordinating the efforts of subordinate elements. The system must be flexible enough to handle such changes as rerouting and rescheduling.
- \* Planning must be detailed and coordinated. Such aspects as surprise and security should be considered. Troops must be fed enroute and a logistical base must either accompany the unit or arrangements must be made to receive support at the other end.
- \* Unit leadership plays a major role in maintaining personnel accountability, morale, and keeping down incidents during movement.
- \* Upon arrival, events can happen quickly, leaving little time for rest or coordination. The use of local personnel to serve as guides can compensate for initial unfamiliarity with terrain. Interoperability is greatly facilitated by common doctrine and training, command and control, logistics systems and compatible equipment.

There is certainly nothing new in that brief list of lessons learned. After action reports from almost any REFORGER or TEAM SPIRIT exercise will contain most of the same items under the deployment section. But maybe that is what is important. After more than 122 years, things may not have changed as much as we might

think. If so, one of the most important lessons from the entire operation is the simple fact that the movement was even attempted in the first place. Out-numbered on every front, and having recently suffered major tactical defeats, a small group of dedicated individuals planned and executed the rail movement. In spite of overwhelming problems, the Confederacy was still able and willing to seize the initiative, gain superior numbers at a critical point, and win a tactical victory. Although the strategic advantages were subsequently thrown away by a failure to maintain that initiative, that makes the lessons even more important. If we are to learn from history, the task is to ensure that those lessons are remembered and used to assist us in the future.

CHAPTER 5

END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Giles, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>Black, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup>The Confederate Congress finally established complete War Department control over all transportation and communication on February 28, 1865. By then, of course, it was too late to be of value. Yearns, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup>Sims to Whitford, September 8, 1863, Sims Letterbook, Huntington Library.

<sup>5</sup>Dickert, p. 267.

<sup>6</sup>Hood, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup>Polley, p. 206.

<sup>8</sup>Oates, p. 253.

<sup>9</sup>O.R., 1, XXX, Pt. 2, p. 290.

<sup>10</sup>Tucker, pp. 140-141.

<sup>11</sup>O.R., 1, XXIX, Pt. 2, p. 721.

<sup>12</sup>Sorrel, p. 185.

<sup>13</sup>Tucker, p. 174.

<sup>14</sup>Polley, p. 209.

<sup>15</sup>Bromfield L. Ridley, Battles and Sketches of the Army of Tennessee (Mexico, Mo.: Missouri Printing & Pub. Co., 1906), p. 222; Dickert, p. 268.

<sup>16</sup>Polley, p. 213.

APPENDIX

ORGANIZATION OF CONFEDERATE FORCES  
AT CHICKAMAUGA

ARMY OF TENNESSEE, C.S.A.  
General Braxton Bragg

Right Wing	Left Wing
<p style="text-align: center;">Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk</p> <p><b>Polk's Corps</b> Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Cheatham's Division</b> Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Cheatham</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Jackson's Brigade: Brig. Gen. John K. Jackson</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Maney's Brigade: Brig. Gen. George Maney -</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Smith's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Preston Smith (k); Col. A. J. Vaughan, Jr.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wright's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Marcus J. Wright</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Strahl's Brigade: Brig. Gen. O. F. Strahl</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Hindman's Division</b> (Assigned to Longstreet)</p> <p><b>Hill's Corps</b> Lt. Gen. Daniel H. Hill</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Cleburne's Division</b> Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wood's Brigade: Brig. Gen. S. A. M. Wood</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Polk's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Lucius E. Polk</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Deshler's Brigade: Brig. Gen. James Deshler (k); Col. Roger Q. Mills</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Breckinridge's Division</b> Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Helm's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Benjamin H. Helm (k)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Adams' Brigade: Brig. Gen. Daniel W. Adams (wC); Col. Randall Lee Gibson</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Stovall's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Marcellus A. Stovall</p> <p><b>Walker's Reserve Corps</b> Maj. Gen. W. H. T. Walker</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Walker's Division</b> Brig. Gen. States Rights Gist</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Gist's Brigade: Col. P. H. Colquitt (k); Lt. Col. Leroy Napier</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Ector's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Matthew D. Ector</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wilson's Brigade: Col. Cladius C. Wilson</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Liddell's Division</b> Brig. Gen. St. John R. Liddell</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Liddell's Brigade: Col. Daniel C. Govan</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Walthall's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Edward C. Walthall</p>	<p><b>Buckner's Corps</b> Maj. Gen. Simon B. Buckner</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Stewart's Division</b> Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Bate's Brigade: Brig. Gen. William B. Bate</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Clayton's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Henry D. Clayton</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Brown's Brigade: Brig. Gen. John C. Brown (w); Col. Edmund C. Cook</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Preston's Division</b> Brig. Gen. William Preston</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Gracie's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Archibald Gracie, Jr.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Kelly's Brigade: Col. John H. Kelly</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Trigg's Brigade: Col. Robert C. Trigg</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Hindman's Division</b> (detached from Polk's Corps) Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman (w); Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Anderson's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson; Col. J. H. Sharp</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Deas' Brigade: Brig. Gen. Zachariah C. Deas</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Manigault's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Arthur M. Manigault</p> <p><b>Hood's Corps</b> Maj. Gen. John B. Hood</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>McLaw's Division</b> Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Kershaw's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw (retained brigade command)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Humphrey's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Johnson's Division</b> Brig. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Johnson's Brigade: Col. John S. Fulton</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Gregg's Brigade: Brig. Gen. John Gregg (w); Col. Cyrus A. Sugg</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">McNair's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Evander McNair (w); Col. David Coleman</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Hood's Division</b> Brig. Gen. E. McIver Law</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Law's Brigade: Col. James L. Sheffield; Col. William C. Oates</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Robertson's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Jerome B. Robertson; Col. Van H. Manning</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Benning's Brigade: Brig. Gen. Henry L. Benning</p>
<p>(c) captured      (k) killed      (w) wounded</p>	

APPENDIX SOURCE:  
Glenn Tucker, CHICKAMAUGA:  
Bloody Battle in the West  
(Dayton: Horningside Book-  
Shop Press, 1976)

ORGANIZATION OF FEDERAL FORCES  
AT CHICKAMAUGA

ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND, U.S.A.

Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans

**Fourteenth Corps**

Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas

**First Division**

Brig. Gen. Absalom Baird

1st Brigade: Col. Benjamin F. Scribner

2nd Brigade: Brig. Gen. John C.

Starkweather

3rd Brigade: Brig. Gen. John H. King

**Second Division**

Maj. Gen. James S. Negley

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. John Beatty

2nd Brigade: Col. Timothy R. Stanley

(w); Col. William L. Stoughton

3rd Brigade: Col. William Sirwell

**Third Division**

Brig. Gen. John M. Brannan

1st Brigade: Col. John M. Connell

2nd Brigade: Col. John T. Croxton (w);

Col. William H. Hays

3rd Brigade: Col. Ferdinand Van Der-  
veer

**Fourth Division**

Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Reynolds

1st Brigade: Col. John T. Wilder

(mounted and detached)

2nd Brigade: Col. Edward A. King (k);

Col. Milton S. Robinson

3rd Brigade: Brig. Gen. John B. Turchin

**Twentieth Corps**

Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook

**First Division**

Maj. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis

1st Brigade: Col. Sidney P. Post  
(guard duty)

2nd Brigade: Brig. Gen. William P.

Carlin

3rd Brigade: Col. Hans C. Heg (k);

Col. John A. Martin

**Second Division**

Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. August Willich

2nd Brigade: Col. Joseph B. Dodge

3rd Brigade: Col. Philemon P. Baldwin  
(k); Col. William W. Berry

**Third Division**

Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. William H.

Lytle (k); Col. Silas Miller

2nd Brigade: Col. Bernard Laiboldt

3rd Brigade: Col. Luther P. Bradley

(w); Col. Nathan H. Walworth

**Twenty-first Corps**

Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden

**First Division**

Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood

1st Brigade: Col. George P. Buell

2nd Brigade: Brig. Gen. George D.

Wagner (on guard in rear)

3rd Brigade: Col. Charles G. Harker

**Second Division**

Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. Charles Cruft.

2nd Brigade: Brig. Gen. William B.

Hazen

3rd Brigade: Col. William Grose

**Third Division**

Brig. Gen. Horatio H. P. Van Cleve

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. Samuel Beatty

2nd Brigade: Col. George F. Dick

3rd Brigade: Col. Sidney M. Barnes

**Reserve Corps**

Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger

**First Division**

Brig. Gen. James B. Steedman

1st Brigade: Brig. Gen. Walter C.

Whitaker

2nd Brigade: Col. John B. Mitchell

**Detached Brigade**

Col. Daniel McCook

(c) captured (k) killed (w) wounded

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